



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

WIDENER



HN PYIJ 7

Phil 9510.2

HARVARD UNIVERSITY.



Harvard College Library

FROM

JOHN HARVEY TREAT,
OF LAWRENCE, MASS.

(Class of 1862).

Received April 25, 1888.

D. W. Treat
BACKBITING.

BY

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

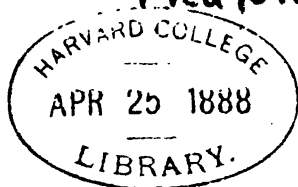
M. Charlotte Elizabeth (Theodora) Phelps

"Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacles? who shall dwell in thy holy hill? He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour."—PSALM XV. 1—3.

ms
NEW-YORK:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN S. TAYLOR & CO.
AT THE NEW-YORK SUNDAY SCHOOL AND JUVENILE BOOK
DEPOSITORY, BRICK CHURCH CHAPEL,
145 NASSAU STREET.

1842.

~~III 1530.3~~ Phil 9510.2



John Harvey Treat.

BACKBITING.

"STAY a little, Caroline," said Miss Dale, "and tell me the rest when Martha returns: she will be here shortly."

"Oh no, sister," exclaimed Caroline,—“I would not repeat it in her presence on any account.”

"Why not? Surely it is better that she should hear it from yourself than from me, who may not remember it correctly."

"Then I promise you, Francis, that I will tell you nothing more on the subject," said Caroline, half angry: "you could not suppose that I meant Martha to hear of it again."

"My dear sister," replied Miss Dale, "we do not seem to understand each other. Let us look

a little into the matter, while quietly sitting in this pleasant shade. You tell me that our cousin Martha spoke of me with unkindness, and in a manner likely to make you treat me with less attention than mamma wishes you to show to a sister some years your elder."

"She did so," said Caroline.

"Well; she must have had some reasons for so doing, although I am not aware of having given her any cause of offence; or else it was from a feeling of unreasonable and unprovoked dislike."

"It was the last, Frances: you never gave her reason to say an uncivil word of you. It was all spite and ill-nature, depend upon it."

"We must not judge so hastily and harshly, sister. Martha may have misunderstood something in my speech or conduct, and feel herself hurt at it; while a little explanation will set it all right. But if it be, as you think, real intentional unkindness, surely it is our duty to convince her of the fault, which, if not checked, will become a habit very mischievous to others, and dangerous to herself."

"All that may be very true," said Caroline, "but I insist on your not mentioning to her what I was telling you in confidence."

"What then is your object in telling it to me?" Miss Dale asked.

"Why, to let you know that Martha is not so much your friend as she may seem; and to put you upon your guard against trusting her."

Miss Dale shook her head—"Oh! Caroline, this is like telling me that my friend is sick, but at the same time forbidding me to seek out a physician or remedy. Such conduct shows no love either to her or to me; and I much fear that you are yourself the most to blame in the matter."

"What! because I did not like to hear you spoken ill of? If these are the thanks that I get, I shall not trouble myself about it another time."

Caroline turned away, almost crying; and her sister was silent for a minute, then asked, "Did you reprove Martha for her unfriendly speeches concerning me?"

"She might see by my manners that I did not like such speeches," answered Caroline.

"Did you tell her that you should repeat it to me?"

"That would have been getting myself into a scrape, without helping you out of it."

"Then you have left her under the same unkind impression concerning me," said Miss Dale, "and at liberty to repeat her remarks among our young friends. Is this just and right, my dear sister."

Caroline was silent.

"How can we act in this matter?" continued Miss Dale. "You surely would not wish me to remain exposed to such ungenerous backbiting."

Caroline answered, "I will tell you what I will do, sister. The next time we meet, I will speak seriously to Martha upon the subject, and ask her reasons for those ill-natured remarks. That will prevent her talking any more about it either to me or to others."

"I am not sure that you will succeed so far," said her sister. "Are you prepared to prove to her, from Scripture, the nature and bad con-

sequences of her fault, and to show her the remedy?"

"There is nothing in the Bible about backbiting," observed Caroline.

"Indeed there is,—a great deal, I assure you. It is one of the evils to which our hearts are most prone; and, as it leads to more serious offences, Satan is ever ready to bring that temptation into our way. Do you suppose that we are left without guard or direction in any case where a snare may be spread for our feet? No, no, Caroline—in every temptation the Lord makes a way of escape; and not only makes it, but points it out to us. Unless you are able to convince Martha of her fault on Scriptural grounds, you must not, for her soul's sake, prevent my attempting to do so."

Caroline seemed a good deal distressed: at last she said, "Well, Frances, I shall not say any more to hinder you: but let me have time to recollect exactly what her expressions were, that you may not accuse me of misrepresenting them."

"Ah! Caroline, you now see one benefit of fair dealing. Whilst you expected me to keep

it a secret, you were not so particular as to the exactness of your report, but were in haste to tell me all. Now that you know it is to be repeated again, you will take time, and be careful not to commit any mistake."

"So, then, you think that I would have told you a parcel of falsehoods about the matter?" said Caroline, rather resentfully.

"I did not mean to say so, my dear; but there is this difference between our manner of relating our own faults and those of others,—that in the first case we are tempted to make the matter look as favourable as possible, and in the last to do just the contrary. If you watch yourself, Caroline, you will find that I speak truth. I am sure that it is so with me, at least."

Having recollected herself sufficiently, Caroline repeated the conversation that had passed between her cousin and herself: it did not amount to nearly so much unkindness towards Miss Dale as her sister had at first led her to suppose; but the remarks were unfriendly, and proved that Martha had put the worst construction on some matters where she might have judged more

favourably. One observation, relating to her person and dress, Caroline had repeated before her sister stopped her; and now, in going over it again, Miss Dale observed that she softened it very much. Indeed, it was plain, that, if Martha had spoken unkindly of one cousin, the other had made the most of her fault in relating it.

On that evening, Martha came to take tea at Mr. Dale's; and all went on just as usual. Indeed, Frances behaved so exactly the same as if nothing had happened, that Caroline began to think there was an end of the subject altogether—but she was mistaken.

After tea, the young ladies went to look at the flower garden, which shone in livelier colours, and yielded a richer fragrance, from being plentifully supplied with water by the careful gardener. Roses and carnations, honeysuckles, sweat-pea, and mignonette, with all the variety of summer tints and perfumes, seemed to welcome the visitors, who arrived at last at a rustic seat, near to which a spreading plant of the evening primrose was unfolding its bright yellow

flowers as the sinking sun threw the deep shadow of neighbouring shrubs over it. This was a favourite seat of Caroline's: she loved to watch the bursting of the blossoms into golden cups,—formed, as it were, but to catch the dews of a night, and then to perish when the morning sun had sucked those dews away.

Here, then, the young friends seated themselves,—conversing for some time upon the beautiful scene around them. Martha remarked how great was the goodness of God, in decking the earth with so many lovely things to gladden the eyes of his creatures.

“It is wonderful,” said Miss Dale, “that a single flower should grow from an earth so polluted by the sins of its inhabitants. The briers and thorns are all that we could reasonably look for at the hands of our insulted Creator: but when he made known the promised redemption to Adam and Eve,—the seed of the woman who should bruise the serpent's head,—the Lord seems to have softened the curse, even as regarded the earth, and to have left a memorial of his tender love in every sweet flower that

smiles upon the soil. To the Lord Jesus, 'the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,' we owe this and every comfort of our mortal lives, no less than the glorious inheritance which he has prepared for his people hereafter."

"Does the Bible tell us that?" asked Martha.

"I think that is to be inferred from many passages," replied Miss Dale. "'The angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day :' for Christ 'took not on him the nature of angels'—they have no Mediator, therefore no hope. God is to them a Creator and a Judge, but not a Saviour; and we find that chains and darkness are their portion until the day of judgment, when they shall be cast into the lake of fire. From this I conclude, that the sinners of 'mankind are surrounded with so many proofs of God's merciful and tender care, in order to win them to seek him as a Saviour, willing to receive, and to pardon, and to bless. There are beautiful instances of this in the Bible,—such as his pointing out that most lovely ob-

ject the rainbow as the token of a covenant by which the Lord bound himself never again to destroy the earth with water. And that this was the type of a more glorious covenant we know, because John, in his sublime vision, saw a rainbow round the throne of God and the Lamb."

"Yes," said Caroline ; "and, you know, St. Paul told the heathen that rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, were given as witnesses of God, that they might seek after him."

"It is quite plain," said Martha ; "and indeed every thing becomes both plain and instructive, when we take the Bible for our guide."

"And are you willing, dear Martha, to be guided by the Bible in all things?" asked Miss Dale, affectionately.

"I hope so, cousin, indeed."

"Then do not be displeased, my dear, if I point out to you an instance in which you have not rightly followed its blessed precept."

Martha seemed surprised, and not quite pleased ; while Caroline made herself very busy in helping a bud of the evening primrose to unfold its petals, by means of a pin. Miss Dale turned

over the leaves of her small Bible, and shewed Martha the following passage in the eighteenth chapter of St. Matthew, and fifteenth verse,—putting her arm round her, with much kindness, while she read it,—“If thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.”

Martha looked at Miss Dale, much perplexed, and said, “How have I transgressed this precept, cousin?”

“Did you not forget it, Martha, when you expressed to my sister your dissatisfaction at some parts of my conduct, instead of mentioning it to me?”

Martha coloured most deeply, and in great anger turned to Caroline—“What mischief have you been making now?”

“I have told nothing but the truth,” replied Caroline; “and that I shall always tell.”

“I wish you may have told nothing more or less in this case,” said Martha. “Now, Frances, since she has been tale-bearing, you shall hear all, and judge who is most to blame.”

"I do not wish to blame either of you, my dears," said Miss Dale; "neither, perhaps, could I be a fair judge in the matter, as it concerns myself; but I wish to shew you what cautions the blessed word of God gives us, when under temptations, to speak harshly of others in their absence."

"But, cousin," exclaimed Martha, "I insist on being heard; for Caroline has no more right to speak ill of me to you, behind my back, than I have to find fault with you to her."

"Then, if you wish it, explain the matter by turns; but do not let Satan get advantage of you, by beguiling you into anger one against the other. I feel no resentment, whatever; and my only pain is in the fear that my dear girls should be led into anything sinful on my account. That would indeed be grief to me."

"Well, Frances," said Martha, "I, for one, will try not to be angry, whatever cause I have to complain: but really if every thoughtless word is to be laid hold of and repeated, there can be no comfort nor security in talking with our friends."

She then requested to know what Caroline had accused her of saying; and, while obliged to admit a good deal of it to be correct, she put in much that shewed her to be less blameable than had appeared, and some that proved Caroline herself not a little in the wrong—more especially as it came out that they had afterwards disagreed on another subject; and there was good reason to suspect that the ill-humour in which they parted had led Caroline to report her cousin so unfavourably to Frances.

“You see, now,” said Martha, as they concluded, “that all the fault was not on my side.”

“I never supposed that it was,” answered Miss Dale. “It very rarely happens that one party alone is wrong; and I consented to this full explanation on purpose to give each of you the opportunity of doing justice to herself. Had I questioned you apart, it would only have tempted you both to take advantages, and to justify yourselves, each at the expense of the other, and perhaps of truth also.”

“I must own the reasonableness of what you say, Frances,” replied Martha; “and though I

cannot think that Caroline meant me kindly in repeating to you, still I feel glad that all is out. I hope you forgive me for what I did say—I was very wrong in it—pray forgive me cousin”—and her looks shewed that she was in earnest in this request.

Miss Dale, kissing her affectionately, answered, My dear, dear Martha, I not only forgive, but love you better than before—not because you have committed a fault, but because you have had grace given you to see and acknowledge it as such, and to rejoice in the painful and mortifying exposure by which you were brought to reflect upon it. But our poor Caroline looks very sad: come, my sister, and let us all thank the Lord for breaking this snare of Satan, and using it as a tie to chain us yet more closely together.”

Having all exchanged forgiveness, and expressed their increased affection for each other, they now proceeded to examine the word of God on the subject that had engaged them so much.

Martha said, “The text that you shewed me, Frances, does not exactly suit the present case ;

for you had not trespassed against me ; and what I said was more in the way of remark than of complaint. More particularly, what I am most ashamed of, my not liking the colour of your eyes, was a thing that you could not have mended, even if it were your wish to do so."

Miss Dale smiled, and answered, "What you are most concerned at, certainly troubled me the least ; for, as you say, I could not mend it ; and besides, tastes differ so much, that had I my choice of all the eyes in the world, I could scarcely hope to select a pair that should please everybody. Still I agree with you, Martha, that we ought to be most especially careful not to make severe remarks upon the personal peculiarities of others, because in so doing we may seem to despise Him whose workmanship we are censuring. In this case, the safe rule is, to say nothing in any person's absence that we would not declare in his presence ; and to avoid alike what would render him vain of God's gifts, or discontented with them."

"But stay, cousin," said Martha, "for I want to consider a little more the circumstance which

you are so kindly putting into the back ground. I might, to be sure, say at any time, that I preferred one colour to another, without any ill-natured feeling: but I was then speaking unfavorably of you, and my bringing it in as I did, was all of a piece with the rest: in short, it was mean, spiteful, and unjust. I well remember how indignant we both felt, when some neighbours of ours were speaking with contempt of another, and turning into ridicule some things that she could not possibly help. Do you recollect it, Frances? If so, you will own that I have made myself a partaker in the fault which I condemned so very much in others."

"I have not forgotten that event," replied Miss Dale; "and you know, that I have avoided any farther intimacy with the persons to whom you allude. Their conduct was wrong in the extreme, for they were endeavouring to make an unfavorable impression on the minds of strangers, concerning one whose afflictions were the sole ground of their unkind remarks. You know, Martha, how this cruel act of backbiting defeated its own purpose. We were

shocked at being called upon to join in making a jest of the bodily infirmities of one who had lately come among us, and to whom that family was professing personal kindness, while thus striving to bring her into contempt with all their acquaintance. Such an act adds 'cruel mockings' to backbiting; and, although I trust that the persons in question did not really feel all the ungenerous ill-will that their conduct seemed to express, yet it certainly made me shrink from them, conscious that no one could be secure from becoming, in turn, the victim of such a dangerous habit of misrepresentation; and led me, at the same time, to seek the acquaintance of the person alluded to, whose friendship we now enjoy."

"Very much to the annoyance of those, who so unintentionally led to it," added Caroline. "They seem to hate her now; and for no other reason that I can discover, but because they have injured her."

"That is another important and lamentable consequence of backbiting," replied her sister. "Those who indulge themselves in secretly

smiting another, must needs labour under guilty consciousness, which torments them whenever they see or think of the object of their unkindness. This, again, leads to a misplaced resentment; or, at best, to a habit of seeking some occasion to censure that person with more colour of justice; and what is this but coming under that sad character which David gives his enemies,—‘when my foot slipped, they rejoiced greatly against me.’ My dear girls, see, to what one false step, one calumniating expression, may lead you! It is a very common, and, I think, a very just observation, that the aggressor is rarely reconciled to the injured party. When a backbiter meets the object of his undiscovered malignity, and is greeted with the frankness of unsuspecting good will: his feelings, if he be not utterly lost to all feeling, must needs be of a very painful character,—the dread of detection being added to the sting of self-reproach: and when, as is very frequently the case, he sees his plans defeated, and those persons, whom he has endeavoured to separate at the price of his honesty and veracity, enjoying each other’s

confidence, the snare which he has laid for his soul becomes yet more formidable; disappointment in the object of an unhallowed pursuit, embitters him farther; the assurance, that his falsehood is known to one party, and therefore in danger of being communicated to the other, keeps him in a state of feverish anxiety, longing for some opportunity of yet breaking a friendship which menaces him with exposure. He who before indulged a groundless enmity against one person, now includes another, on grounds the most palpably unjust in that hostility; and what a canker must be preying upon the daily comfort of an individual so situated!"

"It is perfectly dreadful," said Martha; "and worse than you have represented, cousin: for a backbiter seldom contents himself with uttering his unkindness to one person only. He gets a habit of evil speaking,—does he not?—and then, you know, the danger of being found out is increased: and he will be tempted to become a general mischief-maker, setting people to mistrust each other, for fear they should come to an explanation."

"Yes," said Caroline; "and when, instead of one person, a family joins in slandering others, it becomes worse and worse."

"It does, indeed," said Miss Dale; "for those who have been witness to each others falsehoods, will not only be tempted to afford mutual support in what they know to be sinful, but will also be led, in the day of discovery, to turn upon one another with reproach and recrimination. This pernicious habit, sometimes begun in mere thoughtlessness, has often planted a thorn in the bosom of a family, destroying all union, and filling the house with discord. When exposure takes place, and 'a lying lip is but for a moment,' each will be glad to throw as much blame as possible on another. How strong, therefore, is the encouragement held out to us, to prevent all this evil by telling a brother his fault at once! But we will look for a text still more applicable to what is called backbiting than that in St. Matthew. Here, in the nineteenth chapter of Leviticus, and seventeenth verse, it is written, 'Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart: thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour,

and not suffer sin upon him.' And in the margin I find the last words otherwise rendered,— 'that thou bear not sin for him,' which clearly means, that the guilt of those things for which we fail to reprove our friend will rest upon ourselves."

"That is like the watchman in Ezekiel," said Caroline. "If he neglected to warn the wicked, and that wicked man repented not, he should die in his sin, but his blood would be required at the watchman's hand."

"It is very true, Caroline," said Miss Dale. "We are bound to be watchful over each other, in the spirit of love and tenderness, as it is written, 'Exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin.' In these and many like passages, we see that we are to be observant over the conduct of our friends, and faithful in noticing what appears inconsistent with the Christian profession: but the rule given by our blessed Lord which I shewed to Martha, with very many others, points out to us how we are to make this mutual watchfulness

profitable ; namely, not by declaring our opinion to a third person, but by affectionately and delicately admonishing the individual whose conduct we disapprove. And this way has two advantages to recommend it—first, it is more likely to sink into the heart of our brother, because it shews a tenderness for his feelings and reputation, as well as for his spiritual growth ; and, secondly, it gives him an opportunity of removing any mistake that we may have fallen into concerning his actions or motives.”

“ Yet,” said Martha, “ we find that many, even amongst the best people, are ready to count us their enemies, because we tell them the truth.”

“ No, not the best people,” remarked Caroline ; “ for Solomon says, ‘ he that hateth reproof is brutish.’ And again, ‘ A reproof entereth more into a wise man, than a hundred stripes into a fool.’ How do you reconcile these passages with taking offence at being rebuked.”

“ They may be reconciled in some degree,” said Miss Dale, “ if you bear in mind that ‘ the

flesh lusteth against the Spirit,' even in God's own people, and that to the end. If it were not so, there would be no need of watchfulness, nor of exhorting one another; the Christian life would cease to be a race and a battle; and we might sit down idly together. But the same corrupt nature that leads the children of God into inconsistent conduct, also renders them too ready to take offence at faithful reproof. We must learn the lesson which Paul learned, who said, 'I *know* that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;' and then, like Paul, we shall be able to rejoice in the precious privilege of saying, 'I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God.' The Christian is forced to live *in* the flesh, but he does not live *after* the flesh: when he feels it striving against the Spirit, he calls upon that Almighty Power who can and will give him the victory."

"Explain this farther, if you please, sister," said Caroline.

"I will try to do so, my dear. We may sup-

pose that two people need to be reprov'd for a fault,—one of them being a worldly character, and the other really a Christian. The unconverted person takes offence at your freedom,—charges you with impertinence,—justifies himself,—and becomes the more hardened, by giving way to the pride which refuses instruction. The other, probably, at the first moment also feels hurt, and mortified at having fallen in the estimation of a friend; while Satan, always on the watch, stirs up the pride of the heart, whose natural language always is, ‘Who is Lord over us?’ But here, if it go so far, the Holy Spirit interposes, bringing to remembrance some word of Scripture, to warn the believer that such feelings are not spiritual, but carnal; and, together with this, an assurance that Christ is able to supply that strength by which alone the evil nature can be kept in subjection, and the follower of Christ made like-minded with his Master. Thus the enmity is overcome; and, though at first resisted, the reproof does enter into the man, and is blessed to him.”

"What a beautiful work it is that Christ does for his people!" exclaimed Martha.

"And in them," added Miss Dale. "You must perceive, that, alone, we can do nothing but rebel; and if Christ be not in us, as well as for us, what could support us against the least temptation? Nothing is more dwelt upon than this truth in the word of God; and perhaps the plainest of all the figures by which it is set forth to us, is that of the vine and its branches. It avails not how near the branch may be to the tree: if the living sap of the vine be not actually within the branch, it is dead."

"If we thought more of this," said Caroline, "would not Christians feel greater respect for one another?"

"Assuredly they would," replied Miss Dale, "We treat the hand of a king with more reverence and tenderness than that of a common man: how much more do the members of the King of kings claim this regard from us!

"But now to return to the subject which we have almost lost sight of: there are many direct

prohibitions against backbiting in the Bible, and some examples of its being practised by wicked persons who had no fear of God before their eyes, and whose punishment shews us the hatred that the Lord bears to it. We will begin with the precepts. In the twenty-fifth chapter of Proverbs, twenty-third verse, we read, 'The north wind driveth away rain; so doth an angry countenance a backbiting tongue.' In some cases, a doubt arose among the translators of the Bible, as to the best way of expressing in English the meaning of the Hebrew; wherever this was the case the different reading is put in the margin: and there we find it rendered, 'The north wind bringeth rain; so doth a backbiting tongue an angry countenance.' In either way, it is a profitable lesson: we are justified in using a severe aspect, and words of rebuke too, when backbiters approach us, that they may be silenced; and, on the other hand, there is nothing more sure to stir up strife, and to occasion unkind looks and thoughts among friends, than the work of a backbiter. Again, in the fifteenth Psalm, it is noticed even more impres-

sively ; for, in reply to the solemn question, ' Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle ? who shall dwell in thy holy hill ? ' it is declared, among other particulars, ' He that backbiteth not with his tongue '—' nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour ; and this last is rendered in the margin, ' covereth a reproach, ' which is perhaps the best explanation that could be given of encouraging a backbiter. Here we see that God takes much note of what we are apt to esteem as a comparative trifle. But let us turn to the New Testament, and we shall learn more of this dangerous character. St. Paul, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, and twelfth chapter, expressing his anxious fear lest he should not find the members of that church such as he would, mentions ' backbitings ' among the things that he dreads to discover there ; you may see it in the twentieth verse. But the strongest passage of all is in the Epistle to the Romans, where ' backbiters ' stand in the most awful situation, next to haters of God, and others, all of whom the apostle declares to be worthy of death—such as, not liking to retain

God in their knowledge, were by him given over to a reprobate mind, which is the most dreadful thing that can possibly befall any human being on this side of a wretched eternity. You may see the whole of the passage in the last five verses of the first chapter of this Epistle."

Martha and Caroline seemed very much struck, and read with very serious countenances the words that were pointed out to them. Martha then said, "Tell me, cousin, in as plain words as you can, exactly what is meant by the term backbiting. Does all speaking of people in their absence come under that character?"

"No," answered Miss Dale, "that cannot be. The word explains itself better than most words do. It gives you the idea of one who comes behind another, and inflicts a wound from which he cannot defend himself, because the approach of the enemy is unseen; and he may also hide himself before the injured party can turn round. Thus the sufferer feels the effect of the wound, without being able to discover how, or from what quarter, or with what assistance it was given. Among the solemn denunciations of

the law, it is written, 'Cursed is he that smiteth his neighbour secretly;' and backbiting is the secret blow, which the tongue can sometimes give more fatally than the hand. I should say, that backbiting includes every remark likely to lower the person spoken of in the opinion of others, when that person is absent—such as the repetition of any story that we may have heard respecting him, or any unfavorable construction that we may ourselves have put upon his words and actions. Or, even supposing real faults in both to have come under our observation, still to repeat them to others, instead of telling him of them in the spirit of love and faithfulness, is also backbiting. And let us remember that nothing so rouses, and seems to justify the pride of the heart, as being told of ungenerous things having been uttered concerning us to others. I doubt whether a single fault was ever cured in any person by means of backbiting, while many have been occasioned by it. He who hears that he has been so treated will become mistrustful of others, and be exposed to one of two great snares—either he will suffer that

anxiety concerning the opinions of others which is a dangerous 'fear of man,' and above which the Christian ought to rise ; or else he will be provoked into an unbecoming contempt of what others may think about him, and so neglect the command to 'abstain from every appearance of evil,' and not to let his good be evil spoken of. As an individual the true Christian will count it a small matter to be judged of man's judgment ; but as a member of Christ's body, the church, he ought to be very careful that no offence be given through him to the other members, lest he grieve the glorious Head, and cause his holy name to be blasphemed among his enemies."

"What a deal of sin and mischief may come from one ill-natured observation!" said Martha, sorrowfully. "I never thought rightly about this before. Will you go on, dear cousin, to shew us the instances that you spoke of in the Bible? We cannot be too much guarded against this wicked and common habit."

"We will look out a few of them," answered Miss Dale : "but even if there were not one,

we should not be at a loss to know the mind of God on the subject, after all the testimonies that we have been considering."

Then turning to the book of Ezra, she went on—"We may see here what evil could be done by a malicious report, secretly made. Ezra, after the long captivity of his people in Babylon, had obtained from Cyrus a decree for the rebuilding of Jerusalem and its glorious temple. Every mode was tried by the enemies of the Jews, who hired counsellors against them, to frustrate their purpose: but, though their hands were weakened, still the work proceeded, until, in the days of Artaxerxes, a malignant letter was privately sent up to that monarch, in which were contained charges against the people of Jerusalem, as having always been a rebellious and seditious race,—adding that, if the walls were again set up, it would be the means of rending from the king all his portion on that side of the river. In consequence of this, the monarch caused search to be made into the records; and finding that the Jews had of old 'made insurrection against kings,' he empowered

these crafty backbiters to stay the progress of the work, without giving the accused any opportunity of explaining their objects, and vindicating their proceedings, by a reference to the decree of Cyrus. Thus, through the treachery of the enemies of God, his cause and people received a wound that was not healed until, in the reign of Darius, the Jews united in an appeal to him, which being faithfully reported by Tatnai, the governor, the decree was sought and found ; and the Lord's work proceeded triumphantly under the sanction of Darius, whose heart was so disposed by the power of the Most High, that he gave every assistance to it. If you read the interesting books of Ezra and Nehemiah throughout, you will be struck with the strong and beautiful contrast between the faithful Jews and their opposers. On the part of the latter you will find a complete specimen of low cunning, gross falsehood, and unprincipled backbiting, when prevented from using violence ; while in the builders we have a shining instance of strong faith, holy daring, unswerving integrity, diligence, and perseverance,

crowned with a signal though peaceful triumph over all the dishonest stratagems of the adversary. It is a most instructive portion of God's word; and very remarkable is the steadiness with which the builders refused to avail themselves of the aid treacherously proffered by those who loved not the cause. They would not do evil that good might come: and, acting upon this upright principle, we find that, after they had suffered awhile, they were strengthened, stablished, settled, and made to possess again the inheritance of their fathers."

"We will read those two books together, Martha," said Caroline. "I need, as much as any one can do, to be taught the duty and blessing of being really honest."

"We all require it," added Miss Dale; "for deceitfulness is the natural character of man's heart; and it is very delightful to trace in Scripture history, the integrity practised by those who, though they could do no good thing of themselves, yet found the strength of the Lord sufficient for all their need, and yet could thankfully say, 'by the grace of God I am what

I am.' We will turn now to one of the most remarkable instances of wanton cruelty and mean revenge that ever was heard of; and its purpose nearly accomplished too, by means of what may fairly be called backbiting. The Jews were here also the intended victims, and at nearly the same period of time as that we have just noticed. In the book of Esther, we find the unprincipled favorite of Ahasuerus, Haman, in revenge for a slight put upon him by Mordecai, going to the king with a false and slanderous report of the Jewish people, then scattered in captivity throughout his empire, and by his misrepresentations, and the promise of gain to the king's treasury, obtaining an order to put them all to death. You know how the Lord defeated this wicked project by means of Esther, and brought upon Haman the destruction that he had prepared for others."

"There are few characters more revolting than Haman's," said Martha.

"I think so too, cousin; and if we look into the matter, we shall find that the principal features in it are arrogance and ambition, which

naturally lead to discontent ; and the proud and haughty man usually feels ashamed to acknowledge that trifles can affect his comfort so much, and therefore he is glad to invent something to give an appearance of justice to his dissatisfaction. We must be on the watch for the first rising of these repining thoughts, and resist them by the word of God and prayer. But here is another backbiter. You remember that the affectionate and noble-minded Jonathan left a son, named Mephibosheth, whom David promoted to a situation of honour and comfort. His servant Ziba took advantage of his being lame in his feet, and went with refreshment and supplies to King David, during the sad time of Absalom's rebellion. When the king inquired for Mephibosheth, the crafty Ziba answered that he had remained at home, in the hope of recovering the kingdom of his fathers, by means of this civil war. This was a shameful instance of backbiting ; and we can hardly help regretting that David did not punish it when discovered : for who does not feel indignant at the wrong put upon an afflicted and unoffending

prince? in every case, we find this practice associated with something more grossly wicked than itself; and hence we may judge how contrary it is to the mind that was in Christ Jesus."

"Was not our Lord himself often the object of backbiting?" asked Caroline.

"Oh yes," replied Miss Dale: "he was surrounded by those who gave him good words with their mouth, but cursed with their heart, and, when among their own companions, spake all manner of evil against him. We find our Lord more frequently replying to their thoughts than to their words, in his discourses with the unbelieving Jews, who, while they attributed the great abstinence of John the Baptist to the power of a devil, blasphemously spoke of the Lord Jesus as a man gluttonous and a wine bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. No one was ever so spoken against, slandered and misrepresented, as He was, who alone bore a nature perfectly free from all taint of sin: it was part of those sufferings which he encountered for our sakes, sufferings that at once gave

him a feeling of our infirmities, and purchased for us that help by which we may overcome the tempter, who would otherwise enslave us here, and exult over us for ever."

"Oh! sister," said Caroline, "I have been far more guilty than you may suppose, in this matter. I was not so conscious of it at the time; but now I feel sure that there was less of backbiting in what Martha said than in my repeating it as I did to you. How can I be thankful enough for your resolution in not keeping it secret! I might have gone on until it became a habit, and so have been an enemy to my friends, to my own soul, and to the gospel of Christ too."

"We have both reason to be very grateful to you, dear Frances," said Martha.

"Not to me," answered Miss Dale, "but to Him who by his grace makes me mindful of what I have been telling to you, my dear girls. Let us then resolve to resist in ourselves the least tendency to this sin, and always to oppose it in others, by demanding an explanation between the parties concerned."

"But," said Martha, "what should we do when the things repeated consist only of ill-natured observations upon what we cannot help—such as our persons, our circumstances, and so forth?"

"In that case," answered Miss Dale, "it is really insulting on the part of the informer; and it may be as well in a kind and gentle way to remind him of it."

"Pardon me," said Martha, "but sometimes people pretend a great affection for others, even while using such language as that in their absence; thus they prove that their regard is merely feigned. Is it not right to let the person so imposed upon know this? a great deal of mischief may be done, through the confidence placed in such unworthy companions."

"That is true," replied Miss Dale, "and it proves how much need we have to pray for wisdom in all our concerns with others. It is much to be regretted that a mere spirit of levity, a disposition for foolish talking and jesting, often leads people to ridicule those whom they would not seriously injure. We make too light

of that scripture which, by forbidding such things, strikes at the root of the evil. The wish to appear witty is a sad snare to some characters, and they will sacrifice, by little and little, their best feelings and principles to the vain desire of exciting a laugh, by what they consider clever remarks. Again, many who feel that they have themselves no claim to be considered superior characters, think to acquire a sort of eminence by undervaluing their acquaintance; and for this purpose perhaps without being fully aware of such an object, they will constantly speak slightly of those who are named before them. How contrary is this to the spirit of that beautiful injunction, 'In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than themselves.' God has given no idle precepts: there is not a sentence in His book that is not written for our profit; how inexcusable, therefore, are we, when by neglecting that perfect guide, we run into sins from which it would so clearly warn us! Still, though I would not condemn the friendly caution which reveals to another the hollowness of that profession, which

is contradicted by malicious or sneering remarks, uttered in the absence of their object ; I would recommend that the offending party should be first remonstrated with, and, if that fails, apprized that their observations have been, or will be, repeated to the absent person."

"Such honesty is the hardest thing in the world to practice," remarked Caroline.

"Yes, it is contrary to that corrupt nature which will induce us, as soon as we are born, to go astray and speak lies. It is also completely against the tempter's interest, who delights to sow discord, and to encourage disunion among all men ; more especially among those who profess the Gospel of love and peace. What a triumph it must be to Satan, to trace and to help forward such a work as we are speaking of ! First, to find a person, neglecting to ask the Lord to set a watch before his mouth, and to keep the door of his lips,—led by degrees into the utterance of most uncharitable, and perhaps most false expressions against the absent : next to observe a hearer of this, perfectly willing to make mischief, and with no real design for the

benefit of either party ; going with, perhaps, an exaggerated account of these hard speeches, to a third, who receives the report with great indignation, gives way to feelings of resentment, and watches for an occasion of severely retaliating upon the first offender. A prayerful consideration of some plain passages in God's book would prevent the beginning of this evil, or check it in any stage of its course."

"I am sure of that," said Martha, "for I remember now some text that applies to each of the parties. The ninth commandment is against the first: the second is cautioned that 'a tale bearer separateth very friends' and the third has, I may say, the whole New Testament to reprove him; considering how the example of the Lord Jesus, with his own teaching and that of the apostles, will furnish us with a picture of continual long-suffering, forbearance, and forgiveness of injury."

"But the great difficulty," said Caroline, "is to remember these things at the time when we ought to practise them. I never can do this, properly; for Scripture often seems hidden from

me when about to commit a fault ; but when it is done I recollect a great many passages that would have warned me."

"That," replied Miss Dale, "is too often my case : and I feel that the fault is solely in myself. My nature is altogether evil so that to do what is wrong, I find very easy and agreeable to it. The enemy of my soul constantly labours to increase the natural blindness of my heart : and while tempting and encouraging me to sin, he, does, as it were, put a thick veil between me and the Word of God. But, knowing this, it is my duty to stretch forth the hand of prayer and faith to rend that veil. I am not obliged to consent to the evil : I find a warning voice always within, telling me to pause, and warning me that I am sinning—provoking my God ;—Will any one say that he does not find it so with himself ? will any one deny that he might stop short, and call upon God for that strength which will enable him to break through the snare ? Christian knowledge consists in being made acquainted with the power and will of Christ to help his poor creatures : Christian

wisdom, in making use of that knowledge in the hour of need. The whole of our safety is summed up in two words ; watch and pray ; and we find the injunction repeated so often, that it is hard to say whether is greater, the folly or the sin of neglecting it as we do."

"I hope we shall remember all this," said Martha to Caroline. "The sin of backbiting never appeared to me so important as this conversation has proved it to be. I will guard against it carefully, with God's help, in myself ; and pray to be enabled to deal wisely with others who may be guilty of it."

"Do so my dear," said Miss Dale : "but, at all events, I would not judge any one to have been guilty of harsh remarks upon the mere authority of a tale-bearer ; and I would endeavour to give him the opportunity of clearing himself of the charge—the more so, because, if true, the exposure may serve as a check upon a very disgraceful habit, and perhaps lead the offender to reflect seriously on its evil tendency. But, as regards ourselves, let us bear in mind that the worst which our fellow-creatures can think or say of us, is far

less than our secret iniquities deserve; while their commendations avail us not in the eyes of Him who alone shall judge us; and before whom we stand, unwise, unfaithful, and unprofitable, with no other hope than that provided for us in the atoning blood and justifying merit of Jesus Christ the righteous, who is the propitiation for our sins."

THE END.

A LIST
OF
VALUABLE AND POPULAR BOOKS,

PUBLISHED BY
JOHN S. TAYLOR & CO.,

THEOLOGICAL AND SUNDAY SCHOOL PUBLISHERS AND
BOOKSELLERS,

At the New-York Juvenile and Sunday School Book Depository,
Brick Church Chapel, 145 Nassau-st.,

NEW-YORK.

D'AUBIGNE'S HISTORY OF THE GREAT
REFORMATION, abridged by the Rev. Ed-
ward Dalton, 1 vol. 18mo. 447 pages. Price 50

Probably no book of modern date has obtained such a wide-spread popularity, and been so extensively read as D'Aubigne's History of the Great Reformation of the sixteenth century, in Germany, Switzerland, &c. Engrossing and enduring as must be the interest connected with the details of the historical incident of the Great Reformation, the author of this work has invested them with all the charm and fascination of romance

The Abridgement retains most of the attractions of the larger work, and brings it within the means, as to time and expense, of a still larger body of readers. the faithfulness with which this Abridgement has been made, the following testimonial from the New-York Observer of Oct. 21, is abundant and satisfactory evidence. It is from the pen of a distinguished clergyman of New-York, whose opinions on such subjects are entitled to universal confidence.

"Abridgement of D'Aubigne.—The following notice of the Abridgement published by John S. Taylor & Co. is from a distinguished officer of the American Tract Society.

'I have read the Rev. Mr. Dalton's Abridgement of D'Aubigne's History, as reprinted by Mr. Taylor, and have fully compared it with Mr. Carter's edition of the original work. I am free to say that I think the abridgement is made with great fidelity and sound judgment. It consists almost wholly of the author's own words, and embraces those parts which are of most prominence and interest. Doubtless those who can command the time will prefer to read the original work; but those who wish to have the substance of the work in less compass, will here find it faithfully condensed by one who entered into the true spirit of D'Aubigne. Both editions I believe calculated to be eminently useful, and I wish to both the widest circulation.'

The work is printed on good type, contains 447 pages, and is sold at the exceedingly low price of 50 cents."

From the New-York Tribune

D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation.— Cheap edition. Abridged by the Rev. Edward Dalton. Second edition. John S. Taylor & Co., Brick Church Chapel 145 Nassau-st.

This edition of D'Aubigne, abridged by a skilful hand, has received the commendations of the press, and

of men of talent, for the rare merits it presents in the present form. It is admirably adapted for Sunday School and Common School Libraries, and for the family. None of the important facts of the original history are omitted, or even mutilated; while all that is extraneous and common-place, has been dropped. It is useless to talk about the advantage a child will reap from the reading of the full edition; the same argument should hold good for all purposes, and we would have to banish books wholly from our School Libraries — for, of the historical portion of those Libraries, hardly a single volume can be found, that is not an abridgement of a more voluminous work. Children *must* have the facts, and the stirring interest of unbroken narrative; their age, and their unripe minds, imperatively demand them, and we might as well forbid them to study Astronomy except through the barren formulas of La Place, as to forbid them to read History except in the philosophic voluminousness of original productions.

- A VOICE FROM ANTIQUITY**, To the Men of the Nineteenth Century: or, Read the Book. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, author of the "History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century." 1 vol. 18mo. Price 25
- THE VOICE OF THE CHURCH ONE**, Under all the Successive Forms of Christianity: A Discourse, pronounced at the opening of the Theological School at Geneva. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, D. D. 1 vol. 18mo. Price 25
- PUSEYISM EXAMINED**. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, D. D., With an Introductory Notice of the author, by Robert Baird. 1 vol. 18mo. Price 25
- THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS**, and other Fragments, from the Study of a Pastor. By Gardiner Spring, Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the city of New-York. 1 vol. 12mo. Price 75

The following notice of Spring's *Fragments* is extracted from the N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.

The first piece, entitled the "Church in the Wilderness," is one of the most beautiful sketches in our language. It is in every respect a finished production—a picture complete in all its parts, that for the time captivates the affections, enchains the powers of the mind, and fills the soul with the most exalted conceptions. The Church is represented, under the various circumstances of her earthly allotment, leaning on the arm of her Beloved, and deriving all her strength from this unfailing source. The chastened but glowing fancy, elegance of diction, and purity of thought, conspire to give beauty to the image, and make us dwell upon it with delight.

The other pieces in the collection are scarcely of inferior merit. "The Inquiring Meeting" portrays with great vividness some of the phases which the human heart exhibits, when under the influence of religious excitement. The "Letter to a Young Clergyman" abounds in instructions of inestimable value. It may perhaps be doubted whether the author attaches sufficient importance to pastoral visitation. "The Panorama" is an affecting delineation of the employment of men as they usually appear on the stage of active life. "The Useful Christian" contains sound practical suggestions for informing the mind, regulating the heart, and inspiring energy of action.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE WORLD TO THE

BIBLE, by Gardiner Spring, D. D., 1 vol.

12 mo. Price 1 00

THEOPNEUSTY, Or the Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by L. Gaussen, Professor of Theology in the new Theological School of Geneva, Switzerland. Second American, from the second French edition, revised and enlarged by the author. Translated by the Rev. Edward N. Kirk, 1 vol. 12mo. Price 1 00

THE FAMILY OF BETHANY, By Rev. L. Bonnet, with an Introductory Essay, by the Rev. Hugh White, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. WM. NEVINS, D. D., 1 vol. 12mo.	1 00
TRANSPLANTED FLOWERS, or Memoirs of Mrs. Rumpff, daughter of John Jacob Astor, and the Duchess de Broglie, daughter of Mad. de Stael, by Rev. Robert Baird, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	38
AIDS TO PREACHING AND HEARING, by Rev. Thos. H. Skinner, D. D., 1 vol. 12mo. Price	1 00
HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION, by Thomas Hartwell Horne, author of "Horne's Introduction to the Bible," 1 vol. 18mo. Price	50
MEMOIR OF CHARLES LATHROP WINSLOW, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	31
THE WIDOW'S SON, and other Familiar Tales, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	31
LETTERS FROM IRELAND, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price	1 00
PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS IN HEAVENLY PLACES, by Charlotte Elizabeth, with an Introduction, by Rev. Edward Bickerstith, 1 vol. 12mo. Price	87
PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price	87
THE SIEGE OF DERRY, Or, Sufferings of the Protestants. A Tale of the Revolution, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price	75
HELEN FLEETWOOD, a Narrative, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price	1 00
FLORAL BIOGRAPHY, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price	75
THE FLOWER GARDEN, a Sequel to Floral Biography, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price	75

THE WRONGS OF WOMAN, Or, The Forsaken Home, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25
THE WRONGS OF WOMAN, Or, The Little Pin-Headers, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25
LETTER WRITING, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	31
FLOWER FADED, by Rev. John Angell James. 18mo. Price	37
MEMOIR OF MARTHA, by John Angell James, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25
A PATTERN FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND TRACT DISTRIBUTORS AND A WORD FOR ALL, by John Angell James, gilt. Price	31
COUNSELS TO THE YOUNG, by Rev. A. Alexander, D. D. Price	31
SELF CULTIVATION, by Tryon Edwards. Price	31
EARLY PIETY, by Rev. Jacob Abbott. gilt	31
GLIMPSES OF THE PAST, by Charlotte Elizabeth. 18mo. Price	50
TALES AND ILLUSTRATIONS, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	
FLOWER OF INNOCENCE, OR RACHEL, a true Narrative, with other Tales, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	50
PHILIP AND HIS GARDEN, by Charlotte Elizabeth, with four engravings, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
THE SIMPLE FLOWER and other Tales, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
ALICE BENDEN: A TRUE NARRATIVE, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
THE STAR, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25
THE GOLDEN IMAGE, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 18mo. Price	25

PROMISING AND PERFORMING , by Charlotte Elizabeth. Price . . .	25
BACKBITING , by Charlotte Elizabeth. Price . . .	25
ROCKY ISLAND , and other Parables, by Samuel Wilberforce, M. A., 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	37
THE LITTLE WANDERERS , by Sam'l. Wilberforce, M. A., 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	25
THE KING AND HIS SERVANTS , by Samuel Wilberforce, M. A. 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	25
THE PROPHET'S GUARD , by Samuel Wilberforce, M. A., 1 vol. 18mo. . . .	25
CLOSING SCENES OF THE LIFE OF SAMUEL WISDOM , illustrating the usefulness of Tract Distribution, and early Sabbath School Instruction, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	31
MORAL TALES , by Robert Merry, with engravings, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	50
THE PEEP OF DAY , or a series of the earliest religious Instruction the Infant Mind is capable of receiving, with Verses illustrative of the Subjects, in 1 vol. 18mo. with engravings. Price . . .	50
LINE UPON LINE , by the author of Peep of Day, a second series. Price . . .	50
PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT by the author of Peep of Day, and Line upon Line, etc. Price. . .	50
THE LILLY OF THE VALLEY , by Mrs. Sherwood. Price . . .	31
SHANTY, THE BLACKSMITH , by Mrs. Sherwood. Price . . .	50
THE TRAVELLER , or the Wonder of Art. . . .	31
SCRIPTURE TALES FOR CHILDREN , exemplified by appropriate domestic stories; by Miss Graham, Illustrated with seven elegant engravings by Adams, 1 vol. 16mo. cloth. Price . . .	75
MORAL LESSONS AND STORIES , from the Proverbs of Solomon, by Jane Strickland, Illustrated with 12 elegant engravings by Adams, vol. 16mo. cloth. Price . . .	75

A VISIT TO NORTHERN EUROPE, Or, Sketches, Descriptive, Historical, Political, and Moral, of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and the free cities of Hamburgh and Lubeck; containing notices of the Manners and Customs, Commerce, Manufactures, Arts and Sciences, Education, Literature and Religion of those Countries and Cities. By the Rev. Robert Baird; with Maps and numerous Engravings, in 2 vols. 12mo. Price . . .	2 00
HEROINES OF SACRED HISTORY, by Mrs. Steele, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	50
A SUMMER JOURNEY IN THE WEST, by Mrs. Steele, author of "Heroines of Sacred History," 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	75
MEMOIRS OF MRS. ELIZABETH B. DWIGHT, by Rev. H. G. O. Dwight, of the Mission at Constantinople; and MEMOIR OF MRS. GRANT, of the Persia Mission, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	1 00
MEMOIR OF MRS. SARAH LOUISA TAYLOR, by Rev. Lot Jones, A. M. Fifth Edition, 18mo. Price . . .	50
MEMOIR OF TELLSTORM; The first Swedish Missionary to Lapland, with an Appendix, giving an account of the Stockholm Mission, by the Rev. Geo. Scott, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	31
SKETCHES OF NEWPORT AND ITS VICINITY, with Notices respecting the History, Settlement and Geography of Rhode Island, Illustrated with numerous Engravings, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	75
A PLEA FOR THE INTEMPERATE, by David M. Reese, M. D., 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	25
THE RHODE ISLAND COTTAGE, Or, A Gift for the Children of Sorrow; A Narrative of Facts; by a Presbyter of the Church, 1 vol. 18mo.	31

Q

(2)

LETTER WRITING.

BY

CHARLOTTE ELIZABETH.

Mrs. Charlotte Elizabeth Browne Phelps Town

FIRST AMERICAN, FROM THE SECOND LONDON EDITION.

NEW-YORK:
PUBLISHED BY JOHN S. TAYLOR & CO.
145 Nassau-Street.
1843.

HOPKINS & JENNINGS,
University Press, 111 Fulton-st.
1843.

ON

LETTER WRITING.

‘Do you know, my dear Sister,’ said George Stanley, ‘that I have just been hearing you very ill spoken of?’

‘I am sorry for that,’ replied Mrs. Williams, ‘but it is too common a thing to excite surprise. I know how much the partiality of my friends leads many of them to over-rate what little claims I may possess on their affectionate regard ; and I desire to be thankful for any reproof that may bring me better acquainted with my own demerits. Nevertheless, I would deprecate the custom of evil speaking, more particularly in the absence of the person censured.’

‘Well, if you like it, I can introduce the gentleman who was my informant, and you may hear from him the particulars of the calumny.’

Mrs. Williams hesitated a little: she knew that to encourage a tale-bearer was to participate in his evil doings, and that it also tended to promote a wider spread of the reports in question. Still the impulse of curiosity, stimulated by wounded feeling, prevailed over her better judgment, and she gave a nod of assent. Her brother returned to the party whom he had left, on the other side of the room, discussing a doctrinal point, and led forward a very respectable looking elderly gentleman, whom he announced as Mr. Clay. A few civil speeches having been made, and answered, Stanly requested his friend to repeat what he had recently told him respecting his sister.’

‘I am perfectly ready so to do,’ answered

Mr. Clay, 'premising that I am no otherwise concerned in the matter, than as having heard the statement in question publicly made, in a large party, and on authority, to the competency of which the greater number appeared to yield a full assent.'

'I suppose, then, the individual was one of my particular acquaintances,' said Mrs. Williams, with a smile of good humour.

'I am not prepared, Madam, to speak to that point,' replied Mr. Clay; 'not knowing to what extent her acquaintance with you may have been carried: but she seemed confident of knowing you well. I also learned that she ranks high in the estimation of the religious world, as a discriminating person, very capable of estimating character.'

Mrs. Williams began to feel more uneasy than she wished to acknowledge, and re-

requested her informant to proceed to the particulars of what he had to communicate.

‘I cannot give you a detailed account; a few heads I think I can state. She described you as being extremely selfish, and not a little self-willed.’

‘I am sorry to hear it,’ coolly remarked Mrs. Williams: please to go on, Sir.’

‘She asserted that you were notoriously ungrateful; forgetting alike the mercies of God, and the favours of your friends; making a very thankless return for both.’

Mrs. Williams looked much hurt, and observed, somewhat indignantly, that the person who brought such an accusation against her, would, at least, not find many to sanction it, among her personal friends, who were generally so kind as to give her credit for the opposite character, however undeserved their good opinion might be.

‘Well, Madam,’ proceeded Mr. Clay, ‘I

do not assume to sit in judgment on the subject ; I merely repeat what I heard. Several other things were alleged, much to the same purpose, all being wound up by a bold assertion, that there was little, if any, reality in your religion ; that it might favourably impress your fellow-creatures, but that, in the sight of God, it was too probably a vain show.'

'What, am I represented as a hypocrite, then !' exclaimed Mrs. Williams, with undisguised warmth ; 'no, no : from that charge I surely am free. I regret, Sir, to have inflicted on you the pain of such a recital ; at the same time I do not deny that the conduct of the calumniator, and I must add, of those who could silently listen to such unfounded detraction, well merits a most severe rebuke.'

'However, dear Ellen,' said her brother, 'if your conscience acquits you of these things'—'Indeed it does, George ;' interrupted his sister.

‘Then, why should you be so much moved at the accusation? I must confess, though, that the name of the person with whom the report originated, carries so much weight with me, that I cannot throw off, so lightly as you do, the imputations cast on your Christian profession.’

Mrs. Williams gazed on her brother with astonishment and dismay; but before she could speak Mr. Clay interposed, saying to her ‘come now, dear Madam, let us enter upon the explanation of this strange business, wherein I have been a somewhat unwilling actor, at the earnest request of my friend Stanley. Not to prolong your present inquietude, I must tell you that the particulars which I have mentioned, couched in stronger language than I have ventured to quote, were contained in a letter, read to a party of pious friends; and that letter bore the signature of ‘Ellen Williams.’

Such an unlooked-for explanation confounded not a little the person to whom it was addressed ; she felt, in some measure, relieved, but more vexed ; and a good deal of mortification was added to this. Her brother, a very practical man, had always discouraged the needless exposure of that individual experience which each Christian must have of the corrupt workings within ; and she felt that a great advantage was gained, on his side of the argument, by her strenuous disclaimer of charges which she had considered as the expression of another person's opinion concerning her, but which were now proved to have been brought forward by herself. He was not slow to pursue that advantage. 'Now, Ellen,' said he, 'I have a very simple question to propose to you. Did you, when writing that letter, really believe your own statements?' 'Of course, I did : but' —

‘Nay, hear me out, in two or three plain interrogatories. Did you wish your correspondent to believe them?’

The affirmative that followed this query, was not quite so audibly spoken as the former one.

‘And, if you were desirous to impress her with such an opinion of your inconsistencies, why should you object to their being made known to others?’

‘I certainly wrote as in confidence,’ replied Mrs. Williams; ‘and in the hope of engaging her prayers for me.’

‘Grant it: I do not justify the act of divulging what you confided, but are not the prayers of many to be coveted even more than those of an individual?’

‘I do not deny that.’

‘Then, once more, let me seriously ask you, why did you start back, with indignant dismay, from a picture of yourself, deliber-

ately sketched by your own hand, and disavow its identity ?

‘ Really, George,’ said his sister, ‘ the matter took so strange a turn, and was reported to me under such perplexing circumstances, that I was quite thrown off my guard.’

‘ Then, having it so explained, am I to understand that you now assent to the report made of you — that you are a self-willed, thankless character ; deceiving yourself, and misleading others, by an outward profession, to the reality of which, the inward experience bears little, if any, testimony ?’

‘ Why, brother, you must perceive how great is the difference between a voluntary acknowledgment of one’s own secret rebellion — to which every converted soul can bear witness that the like conflict is in them, and a report, founded on such private confession, sent about to the detriment of the individual.’

‘But still, Ellen, we have not decided : is the picture correct, or is it not?’

Mrs. Williams was exceedingly embarrassed : she felt that her situation was one of great perplexity, and knew not exactly what to answer. Her brother, who sincerely loved her, did not wish to aggravate the awkwardness of her feelings ; and proceeded, with increasing kindness of manner. ‘My dearest sister, I am the last person who ought to assume the office of dictator towards you, because you so well know the many inconsistencies of my character and conduct ; but bear with me, while I enter a little upon this very interesting and important topic. We are assured by Scripture (and experience constantly testifies the universal application of the truth) that the child of God is, on his adoption into His family, placed in a state of conflict, which cannot terminate, so long as he continues in this

mortal body. He becomes a two-fold being, composed of natures that cannot possibly agree, or be at peace together. The fleshly, or carnal mind that was born with him is deeply opposed to the spiritual actings of implanted grace. In the words of the Apostle, "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." He wars, and gradually prevails over many of the corruptions which afflict him ; but as every day's experience more deeply convinces him how very far gone he is from original righteousness ; and as every faithful act of self-examination shows him greater abominations than he had before seen, he, perhaps, scarcely appears to himself to make any real progress, towards the holiness for which he longs : Satan, too, will buffet him, and bring into operation a thousand wiles, to dishearten him in the work ; while the weakness of his faith adds strength to every opponent ; and much of

the help, that he might command, is lost to him, for lack of that continual, fervent appeal to God, which would assuredly bring him succour from on high. Is not this the case?"

'It is indeed, dear brother,' replied Mrs. Williams. And Mr. Clay added, 'you speak the experience of every real believer.'

'I think I do: now, attend to the last point to which I alluded — remissness in calling on God. "As soon as I call upon thee," says the Psalmist, "then shall mine enemies be put to flight: this I know, for thou hearest me." True indeed, is the oft quoted couplet —

"Satan trembles when he sees
The weakest Saint upon his knees."

Such being the case, what device would be the likeliest to divert the child of God from bringing to his Father's throne the supplica-

tion, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me?" would it not be to lead him, with his complaints, to a fellow-mortal; and, while the balmy breath of human sympathy soothes his wounds, to keep him from seeking that searching and healing ointment, which alone can restore soundness, and confirm his strength? 'I am fully persuaded,' continued Mr. Stanley, 'that incalculable mischief is done by this habit of needlessly laying open what we call our experiences, and bewailing our sins, to each other, when we ought to be carrying both to the Hearer of prayer, in the secrecy of our closet devotions.'

'But, Brother, is not this cammanded us, "confess your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed?"'

'Yes: and I know no privilege of Christian communion, more sweet or more profitable than that. We do so, in a manner, in our public worship; as also in private, it is

a wholesome and encouraging exercise, when pursued in unfeigned humility, and with the single desire of obtaining, at the Lord's hands, pardon and help. But do you not perceive a vast difference between calling a chosen friend into counsel, and after apprizing her of your particular need, uniting in solemn supplication for divine aid ; and sitting down to write out a long complaint of your increasing corruptions, to one who may or may not be a fellow-helper in prayer, according to your immediate wants ; and who, in fact, may rather solace herself under her own indwelling sins, by a view of your equally bad plight, than afford you any succour : and, lastly, whose prayers cannot stand to you instead of your own ? In one sense, we must bear one another's burdens ; but do not forget, that in an equally important sense, every one shall bear his own burden.'

'You have made one remark,' said Mr.

Clay, 'that deserves very serious consideration. I doubt not, but many are lulled, in a great measure, to repose, when they ought especially to be up and doing, by the exposure of those things which others are so ready to reveal. We find that the most eminent servants of God, have ever been the readiest to acknowledge themselves unprofitable; and because they, with all their zealous striving, could not attain to perfection, we are too often willing to sit down under a load of unresisted sins, and console ourselves with their confessions. In other words, we hear industrious gardeners regretting that in spite of their daily and hourly care, in plucking up every weed as it appeared, they found the weeds would continue to spring forth; and we take encouragement from this, to let our gardens be overrun with weeds of every description, flourishing, and going to seed, because we have the experimental assurance

of our diligent neighbours, that the race can never be utterly extirpated.'

'I have often heard George speak to that effect,' observed Mrs. Williams, 'but I never could trace the connexion between the evil that he deplures and the habit against which he has always protested. I am not yet fully convinced, that he is altogether right; but the subject certainly strikes me in a somewhat different light, since the practical lesson that you have just given me.'

'I am glad of that : ' answered her brother. 'The fact is, that my friend Clay having often talked over with me the matter in question, wherein we perfectly agree, he mentioned the public reading of your letter, as an instance of what he considered, notwithstanding its frequency, an abuse of very injudicious confidence. I was really much hurt at it; and resolved to try whether it might not be made subservient to my anxious de-

sire of giving you what I consider a right impression on these points. You cannot fairly complain of it, as a particular breach of trust ; for our first argument on this subject originated in your doing the same thing ; or worse, for you sent a letter, containing similar confessions from a friend, to others, who might very probably, and who actually did, circulate it more widely.'

'Yes, but it was a letter containing nothing of a private nature: it was altogether a recital of Christian experience.'

'Pardon me,' said Mr. Clay ; 'but I do not recollect any thing else to have been included in the epistle which I heard at your friend's house.'

'Perhaps not.'

'And, may I, dear Lady, without overstepping the bounds of Christian courtesy, observe that from the careful wording, the well turned periods, the general air of stud-

ied elegance pervading the composition, I could not regard it as the secret groaning of an oppressed spirit, intended to go no farther than the individual whose especial sympathy was demanded.'

'You have made a home remark there,' observed Mr. Stanley. 'I have frequently wondered at the very self-complacent style in which those confessions are penned, contrasting them with the brief and pathetic complaints of David and others, under the real pressure of detested sin. I cannot but fear that such things sometimes come quite as much from the head as from the heart; and that pride makes a rich banquet on the admiration excited by our eloquent displays of humility. If this is, in any measure, the case, how awful is the consideration of peril incurred!'

'Is not that your reason, George, against keeping a diary of your spiritual concerns?'

‘Yes: I am aware that very many Christians find great advantage in so doing, that they may refer to it occasionally, and mark their progress, or discover their backslidings ; but I never could set about the work without detecting in myself a certain carefulness as to the phraseology to be employed, a consciousness that other eyes than my own might see it, a wish to soften or colour matters accordingly, and in short, a spirit of egotism totally unsuited to the ostensible purpose of the work. This led me to throw each successive attempt into the fire ; and to strive after a more honest communing with my own heart in my chamber, and with God in his word and ordinances. I am, as you know, rather opposed to the publication of such things, for this plain reason, that if they were intended to meet the public gaze, I never can rest satisfied that they were the perfectly genuine breathings of a soul before

its God. If they were meant altogether for a private record, I can only say that it is, in my eyes, a very great breach of honour and delicacy to print them.'

'But surely,' said Mrs. Williams, 'the church finds abundant encouragement and consolation from those sweet exercises of sanctified spirits, thus left on record.'

'Well, I don't deny it; I merely give an individual opinion in answer to a direct question of yours. I see Christians publicly appealing to a very high standard, and, too generally, resting content with a very low one. I have turned the matter much in my mind, and am disposed to attribute it, in no small degree, to their habits of "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves." Which habits I believe to be much fostered by the indulgence of spiritual egotism, on paper.'

'But tell me,' asked Mrs. Williams, 'should

we not often droop, if we had not those recorded experiences of God's people, to assure us that they also groaned, even as we do, under the oppression of in-dwelling sin ?

‘What recorded experiences do you refer to ?’

‘Those contained in the confidential letters, and private journals of eminent believers.’

‘So far as the question concerns me, individually,’ replied Mr. Stanley, ‘I must say that I find quite enough in those experiences, which holy men, writing by direct inspiration, have recorded to prevent my drooping, as you express it, more than others must do. Besides, my dear sister, we never find St. Paul, or his companions in tribulation, resting in a bare statement of their internal groanings : it is invariably accompanied with the most soul-quickenings encouragements to throw off every weight, to press forward, to

fight, to strive, to run ; and to these are added, awful warnings of the peril attending an acquiescent frame, when exposed to the buffetings of Satan, and to the risings of that carnal mind, which is enmity against God.'

'You must distinguish, my dear Madam,' said Mr. Clay' 'between those profitable memorials that pious individuals have bequeathed us, of their severe conflicts, and an indulged habit of pouring out indiscriminately to others the confessions and complaints which we ought to make before our God. I well know your brother's feelings on this subject ; and that he is not passing a general censure on that, from which we have all derived benefit : but anxiously seeking to prevent the abuse of a godly exercise.'

'Now try, Ellen,' said Mr. Stanley, 'to recall exactly the feelings under which you wrote the letter that we have been discussing. Did you, from your heart, desire that

your friend should mourn over you as one whose adoption with God's family was yet a dubious point, and fully believing the worst that you could say of yourself, fly to the footstool of the Lord, to wrestle for you in prayer, as a brand not yet fully plucked from the burning? Or was there an admixture of self-complacency, of confident assurance that she would not think half so ill of you as you seemed to wish — of consciousness that your expressed humility would but tend to exalt you more highly in her estimation, and would also, probably, be held forth as a beautiful pattern to others, not so far advanced in Christian attainments? Don't answer me, I have proposed a query for you to follow up in private; and may the Spirit of truth guide us all to an impartial judgment of ourselves, even as we appear in the eye of the Omniscient!

With an affectionate farewell he then, ac-

accompanied by Mr. Clay, left his sister to ponder over their discourse.

Mrs. Williams felt that, with pen and ink or in actual conversation with a friend, she could have been very eloquent, on the subject of self-delusion; and this very consciousness helped to convince her that the work of diligently searching her own spirit, as in the sight of God, was far from being a familiar or an easy occupation to her. She recalled to mind many passages of Scripture, not only sanctioning but enforcing the use of that privilege, without which every child of God would be, in respect of his fellow creatures, a lonely, isolated being; and the communion of saints would exist no longer. Still, she was aware that in her own case a continual recurrence to this privilege had superseded what was of infinitely more importance; and she began seriously to fear that her portion might be with those who,

doing things to be seen of men, "have their reward" in present applause, while He who seeth in secret accepts not the polluted sacrifice.

Mrs. Williams gladly betook herself on that evening to her closet, and, after earnest prayer endeavoured to attain some clear views on a point where her judgment had certainly been hitherto much warped. She realized, as nearly as she could, the feelings under which her letters of Christian experience were usually penned; and the result was unsatisfactory. There was, unquestionably, a desire to be applauded or at least to be secretly admired, by those to whom she thus addressed herself. In some cases, of course, more or less than in others: but she could not conceal from herself that if, by any constraining power her hand was led to trace the real workings of her heart, when thus employed, nothing could induce her to re-

veal, to any human being, what that paper would contain. Is not this, thought she, somewhat of the sin of Ananias? He was not obliged to bring to the apostles any of his possessions: he voluntarily brought a part, and led them to believe that it was the whole. How awful was the rebuke, "thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God" — how fearful the visitation that ensued!

She had engaged in the contemplation, without considering that there was one at hand watchful to perplex her mind; and, when awakened from a too confident state of self-complacency, to lead her into the other extreme of writing bitter things against herself, beyond what the occasion warranted. Is not the fact of Satan's continual interference with us too much lost sight of? The apostles never forget it — "we are not ignorant of his devices," says St. Paul: but do we sufficiently avail ourselves of that know-

ledge, to take into our computation at all times, the wisdom, the power, the activity of our great enemy? By underrating these, and too often by forgetting them altogether, we afford the adversary many an advantage, which he is not slow to seize.

Perplexed and harassed, Mrs. Williams was rejoiced to see her brother, on the following morning, anxious to resume the subject; and to him she freely stated the result of her painful reflections, asking, with tears in her eyes, his counsel and help.

‘Have you sought them at the hand of the Lord, my dear sister?’ ‘Indeed I have; and that you, as a means, might be directed to afford them to me.’

‘Then you are not afraid of bringing your difficulties again before a fellow creature?’

‘No: because you have already been made the instrument of much good to me; and you stand in the relation of an experienced

adviser. At the same time I deeply feel how far different is my present motive from that which actuated me, when writing the letters that now cause me so much grief.'

'Take comfort, dear Ellen : errors in judgment, into which we are all continually falling, are often permitted, to sharpen our circumspection. By the way, did you ever fully consider the meaning of that term?'

'I know that it implies a heedful, deliberate walking, "not as fools, but as wise."'

'Yes, but it is a very expressive word ; indicating a look that takes in every surrounding object. It is not merely a looking forward and on either hand, but backward also. By reviewing the hinderances that have opposed our hitherward path, and the obstacles that we have overcome, we may derive much valuable instruction in what lies before us. Therefore, when remembering that you are commanded to walk cir-

cumspectly, bear also in mind that retrospection is a component part of that duty. And now to settle the question, so far as we can, that regards these free communications of which you speak: first you know that our grand object on earth is to grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We are likewise told to "exhort one another daily, while it is called to-day, lest any be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." We are to build up ourselves on our most holy faith; and this building, as described by St. Peter, consists of individual believers, united, and growing up into a holy Temple for the Lord to dwell in. I think it is very plain that a great measure of free communion between the followers of Christ, is implied in those expressions."

'Certainly: and I have taken them with many similar passages, as my warrant for

unreserved declaration of my experience on spiritual subjects, for the good of others."

'Then comes the inquiry, what part of our experience is most likely to benefit others? To my mind it appears evident, that which shall best renew them for the combat, and present to their view the most striking instances of the Lord's assisting grace. I would not that each should assume over his fellow the office of a teacher; but certainly I cannot agree to the propriety of each setting up a lamentation over his own corruptions in the ear of one equally burdened with himself. Our attitude, dear Ellen, is not that of a parcel of poor wretches lying helpless in an hospital; but that of a company to each of whom Christ has said, "take up thy bed, and walk." It is not good to discourage one another in the effort.'

'But, if we reveal only the best part of our

experiences, and cloke over what is more humbling, are we not in danger of becoming too confident — too dictatorial, in short, pharisaical ?

‘My dear sister, we are in danger at all times ; and our incessant cry must be, “hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.” Always in danger, yet ever secure, is the paradox of Christian warfare. Do not imagine that a boastful spirit, far less a hypocritical pretence to that which we possess not, is included in what I recommend. I only deprecate what cannot tend to practical good : and I advise you to impart to others your own experience more in the form of affectionate, and certainly humble exhortation, than in that of self-condemning laments, the real object of which it is very difficult to ascertain, and their practical use harder yet to discover.’

‘Give me then, George, an instance of the sort of communication that you approve.’

‘Well then, I will refer to the closing paragraph of what hurt you so much ; as repeated by Mr. Clay. You stated that the reality of your religion was doubtful ; that it might be favourably viewed by man, but was probably, in the sight of God, a vain show. I will take it for granted that self-examination closely applied, had brought you to this painful state of mistrust, as to your sincerity before God. In such a case, would it not have been better to pursue the subject in earnest prayer, until you found some rest to your soul ; and then, in writing to a friend, to have introduced remarks on the deceitfulness of the heart of man — a theme where your own recent and bitter conflict would have furnished you with much feeling illustration, without being actually referred to — and

thence to dwell on the paramount importance of a constant, diligent, habitual searching and trying of our ways, assured that there was help laid on Christ, sufficient to supply all our need? I do not advocate writing from the head merely, on any topic that may occur, but making use of what has recently befallen ourselves, while the memory of it is fresh, the impression vivid, and the new mercy warm in our hearts.'

'I must think you are right in this, Brother.'

'To continue the subject; your letter written according to your old plan, might perhaps find your friend under a similar conflict; and then it would tend to increase her depression; or, still worse, to render her content, through the gratifying assurance of your companionship in the evil; and it might probably suggest to her to sit down, and write a similar complaint to some one

else. But on my plan, your communication would, under the divine blessing, be calculated to send her to the throne of grace, for the help that you also had found effectual, and had thereby, as is always the case, been enabled to set forth more powerfully to others. Should it, on the contrary, have found your friend in a careless or presumptuous state of mind, it would prove a timely admonition: and in this way, I presume, we may make our experience truly valuable to others, without laying ourselves open to indiscriminate remark, or hazarding the various mischiefs that a contrary line of conduct may tend to produce?’

‘I will most certainly endeavour,’ said Mrs. Williams, ‘to bear this in mind whenever I sit down to write a letter; but I must both pray and watch against that spirit of dictation to which I am naturally inclined.’

‘Of course you must: and by asking that

wisdom which is liberally given to the seeking soul, you will be rightly guided. I am not ignorant of that device of Satan by which he often strives to withhold our hands from doing the Lord's work, by setting before us, vividly, our own secret and open sins. I sometimes cease from writing, under the overpowering application of that passage, "what hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth?" while conscience testifies in how many things my corrupt nature hates instruction, and casts the word of God behind me.'

'And what then do you do, dear brother?' Mrs. Williams anxiously asked.

'I make a full confession to the Lord, that I am in very deed the chief of sinners; fervently imploring grace to combat the troop of enemies that beset me, the most formidable of which I well know to be my own evil

inclinations ; and then, under an additional proof of the power that in me, individually, resists and opposes the kingdom of Christ among men, I set myself vigorously to the task of fighting my Lord's battles without, while my spirit groans to him for help in the sore conflict that goes on within. Although I am frequently convinced that the discouragement in question is a hindrance set before me by the enemy, yet at times I find it so signally overruled to the keeping me really humbled before God, that I give it a distinguished place among the "all things" that by His mighty power are made to work together for good to me.'

'Oh George!' said Mrs. Williams, 'you have indeed now spoken to the point. That very suggestion, described by you, is often brought to my mind ; and instead of writing something, as I may have intended, for the profit of another, I proceed to lament my own

inconsistencies; and inscribe on the paper before me what you, far more wisely, breathe to the Lord in prayer.'

'And don't you find yourself relieved by this sort of unburthening, and a spirit of self-satisfaction gradually stealing over your mind, in the contemplation of your own eloquent complaints; your touching self-abasement, and candour, and all that?'

'You must have tried it yourself, brother, or you would not describe it so truly.'

'Of course, I have, my dear. It is a specious sort of popery, preferring any confessional to the throne of grace; any mediators to the One whom God has appointed. I discovered its evil effect on myself and others, which led me to abandon it in practice, to denounce it in theory, and to set a double watch both on my lips and pen.'

'But, though you are so sparing both in speech and writing, of what concerns your-

self only, it is easy to discover, in both, that you are any thing but a Pharisee. How do you manage that ?

‘If it be as you say, Ellen, I can only reply that God manages it for me, by giving me constant views of my own depravity. What a man really is, will be seen in his discourse and correspondence, if he speak and write in an honest spirit. You may discover the proud, the covetous, the passionate, the overbearing man, without his giving you a distinct intimation that such he is. In like manner, a heart really humbled under the sense of sin, will be known by its breathings; although no distinct reference should be made to its secret experience on that point.

‘But,’ continued Mr. Stanley, ‘I perceive you are likely to run into an opposite extreme, and to suppress all personal allusion — that is far from being my wish.’

‘ We want a good model, to steer by,’ said his sister.

‘ *Want* a model, Ellen ! have you not the Epistles of St. Paul ?’

‘ Yes : but how can I attain to ~~the~~ standard of an inspired man ?’

‘ Remember, that St. Paul was inspired to speak, not the language of angels, but of weak mortals. He was inspired to set before us the full and perfect truth, as Jesus Christ revealed it to him ; and in so doing to furnish us a lovely and faultless standard, that in all things we may follow him, as he followed Christ. We have no new revelation to make known, but all that the apostles have declared to us, we are commanded to declare to others ; and certainly we have more than a mere tacit permission to follow their style and to adopt their plan of communication with the church.’

‘If this were done, it would greatly elevate the tone of our correspondence.’

‘And certainly that tone needs elevating. I will tell you an instance, Ellen, of what I should like to see very generally followed. My invaluable friend D. who is now with the Lord, wrote to me once a very impressive letter, for which, when we next met, I thanked him, adding that I had found it very profitable. He replied, ‘I hope so, for that letter occupied a whole evening of my time.’ On my remarking that I thought him a much quicker penman than to be so long filling a single sheet of paper to a friend, he answered, ‘on matters of worldly business I can write fast enough ; but I should ill do justice to your soul, or to my own, if in the interchange of thought I did not both pray for wisdom, and study what would be most suitable to our several need. Believe me, dear

Stanley,' he continued, 'every sheet of paper that we fill with idle words and superficial ideas, and mere commonplace remark, stands on record against us as a fearful abuse of one of God's most precious gifts.' I had not then considered the subject so seriously as I now do, and these words of D. made an indelible impression on my mind.'

'I must confess to you, George,' said Mrs. Williams, 'that I feel it a great burden to be continually asked to write letters to my friends. Even if I had nothing else to do, it would tax me very severely to discover profitable matter. Of course, one does not like to send copies of the same original, to half a dozen people; and the consequence is, that I hurry over what I am persuaded to do, not bestowing upon any one of them the attention requisite to make it of value. If I had to write fewer letters, they would be far better executed.'

‘I don’t doubt it. I have, with some difficulty, shaken off half my correspondents, that I might do a little good with the other half.

‘Letter writing is carried to a very mischievous excess, in our day. I should like to enact a law for the publication of all epistles that pass between evangelical professors, excepting what might really and bona-fide relate to their private and family concerns.’

Mrs. Williams smiled. ‘As the partial publication of one of my best written effusions occasioned me such serious annoyance, I should think there would be a very general opposition to your law.’

‘Or else, a general endeavour to write that which is good to the use of edifying, which might produce very valuable effects. However, I am really grieved to see so much time continually thrown away in the utter unprofitableness of what is called private correspondence, particularly among your

sex. We, generally speaking, are too busily engaged, or else too little disposed to sedentary employments for an overgrowth of the evil among us ; but you must pardon me, if I say that it is carried to an excess almost criminal, by numbers of my female friends.'

'What do you consider the chief disadvantages attendant on our letter-writing propensities ?'

'They are almost innumerable, Ellen. As I have often remarked, they foster a spirit of egotism most injurious to godly simplicity and humility ; they not only consume a vast portion of time that might, and ought to be, dedicated to the service of our needy fellow creatures, but come, with a speciousness the most delusive between us and our privileges of communion with God himself. We are apt to fancy the act of writing about religion, and good people, and pious undertakings, to be in itself a religious exercise ; whereas in

most instances, it is nothing better than the veriest gossip, clad in a phraseology somewhat dissimilar from that of the world. The "tattlers and busybodies," denounced by St. Paul, flourish in this soil; and if all that is really trifling, and truly idle, was erased, many a page now well filled and thickly crossed, would present an innocent blank.'

'I confess that you are right, George, as regards the hindrance thrown in the way of usefulness to the poor. It was only a short time since that I undertook to make some clothes for two nice little girls, the children of a poor cottager, who had no materials, nor money to purchase them, or to pay for working them up, if given to her, while her own time was fully occupied at the wash tub.

'Well, I resolved to accomplish my task. to the exclusion of letter writing, because my little girls were to appear as candidates

for admission into a respectable school where decent clothing was an indispensable recommendation. I went to work, but my correspondents were importunate ; upbraidings for my want of punctuality poured in from all quarters, and not a few of them from friends living within reach, every one of whom thought that unless my affection was greatly cooled, I might just spare a few minutes to write a little billet to *her*. Unhappily, I was induced to open my desk, and having written to one, I could not well put others off. I tried to work ; but with eyes and hands equally fatigued, I made little progress. The day of election came ; one only of the poor children had her dress perfectly finished, and the other was rejected, solely on account of her ragged or rather patchwork habiliments. She was put by till next year, separated from a sister with whom she anx-

iously wished to study ; and altogether, the grief of the children, with their Mother's evident regret at having so implicitly relied on my promised aid, let me wish that I had never entered into a correspondence beyond what real business rendered unavoidable.'

'And what steps did you take in consequence of this lesson, Ellen?'

'That is so like you, brother,' exclaimed Mrs. Williams, 'you reduce every thing to practice, and expect others to be equally wise. I took no steps, excepting to reconcile the poor mother by a present, and resolving that in future I would steadily resist such encroachments on my time.'

'And how have your correspondents borne your comparative silence?' asked Mr. Stanley.

'Why, I have not had any occasion yet to withdraw from the usual interchange of let-

ters and notes. I fully purpose doing so, whenever I undertake another work of the sort.'

'Ah, my sister, there are objects all around you for whom some such work might be undertaken every day. How much better would it be to pursue a plan of constant usefulness, in this truly feminine sphere of duty, at the immediate sacrifice of half your epistolary engagements. Either by reducing the number of your correspondents, or resolutely curtailing the length of your effusions by excluding all that is not really and generally profitable, you might redeem a large portion of precious time, to devote to God's poor. Trust me, it was a nobler testimony, in the sight of God and man, to the character of Dorcas, when the weeping widows held forth the coats and garments that she had made for them, than could have been afforded by piles of letters, addressed to her equals,

and containing the records of her internal experience. While the fingers are employed, as Dorcas used hers, the mind is left free for devout meditation and instructive converse. In the use of our literary privileges, (and I am only objecting to their abuse,) hands and thoughts are alike fettered to the one employment; in other words, all the faculties, mental and physical, which a gracious God has entrusted to us for his own service and glory, are in activity, and the entire being absorbed in one occupation. How solemn the question, is that one really tending to the glory of God, and the mutual benefit of ourselves and others? And if a conscientious affirmative cannot be given to the query, how shall we answer it to Him, who, having numbered our days and hours, cannot fail to note the actions by which each fleeting period is stamped as we pass on to eternity. I want to impress upon you the

importance of laying aside every weight that hinders your race of usefulness, for I suppose that no one avowedly recognises the character of a useless Christian, however willing we may be to realize it in our persons ; and I know by experience that a sore hindrance is found in the indulgence of those habits whereof we speak.'

'I feel it also, dear brother,' said Mrs. Williams ; 'and many a silent rebuke has conscience given me on the subject. But I cannot find resolution to break it off.'

'Why — is it not oftener a weariness than an enjoyment ?'

'Oh yes, I acknowledge it. But then I cannot bear to seem unkind to those who love me ; and to be taxed with caprice, inconstancy, and perhaps with the affectation of singularity.'

'Now, Ellen, pause, and mark me. When you by the grace of God were arrested in your career of worldliness, brought to receive

Christ as your only Saviour, and enabled, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, to devote yourself to him, did you not find yourself constrained to come out from the world in which you had lived, and to separate yourself from its ungodly pleasures ?

‘Undoubtedly,’ replied Mrs. Williams ; ‘and I hope that I did so without hesitation or delay.’

‘In obeying the call, so to renounce your former occupations, what were the particular reproaches that you heard from your unconverted friends ?’

Mrs. Williams hesitated ; and after a short silence said, ‘I see your meaning. I cannot deny that they were just what I have enumerated as being probably my portion, if I withdraw from any of my too numerous correspondents.’

‘Yes, that Satan reigns over the world, yet lying in wickedness, we do not presume to

dispute. He is the god of this world, blinding the minds of them that believe not. When one of his former captives, into whose mind the light of the glorious gospel has shined, breaks away from the kingdom of darkness, the enemy stirs up those who yet remain bound, to make every possible opposition to it, by strong appeals to the pride, self-love, self-indulgence, and so on, of their former associate, and not only to these, but to the better feelings of natural affection, and long-existing friendship. Notwithstanding this, those freemen whom the Son has made free, escape from the yoke of bondage, and take refuge in the fold. Back to the world they will not go ; and the great resource of Satan is to introduce as much of worldliness as he can within its sacred fence. Those who have escaped the pollutions of the world in its excess of revellings, banquetings, and the glaring dissipations of systematic

idleness; those who have been taught, that to kill time is indeed a murder of no ordinary dye, may yet be allured into as utter a wastefulness of their most precious talent, as though God would require no interest at their hands. And really, Ellen, I do think that Christian ladies sometimes encourage one another in an occupation as vainly unprofitable, while their pens are tracing characters on a sheet of paper, as though their feet were following out the figure of a dance, on the chalked floor.'

'That is a strong and startling charge, brother.'

'It is deliberately made, my dear sister, and can be maintained. Of course, I only mean as to the actual waste of time, talent, and energy, for which the parties so engaged become accountable. "None of us liveth unto himself;" saith the apostle. Can we say so?'

‘Am I not living to others when I am writing to gratify them?’

‘Not more than if you were dancing to gratify them, unless you first live unto the Lord, in that very act; and so, by His grace, write what shall really edify them. Now I would not have our familiar letters become altogether sermons: I would not banish the detail of personal and domestic incident. I would not exclude the delightful exercise of expatiating on the visible works of God, in this fair creation. I would not even check the expression of individual love, and mutual solicitude concerning temporal things; but I would have each and all occupy a subordinate place, leaving a good proportion for what is truly profitable, both for the writer and the reader.’

‘Well, but I do act up to this rule in my regular letters, George, at least I always mean to do so. However, it strikes me that

you are quitting your argument ; and, instead of shortening our letters, you are giving us a very wide range of subjects, wherewith to lengthen them.'

'Not exactly so, my dear. We made a sort of digression from the subject of epistolary employment in general, to the matter of which our letters should be composed. I return, therefore : I observed that the policy of Satan is to contaminate where he cannot destroy. He knows that God requires of us not only an entire but an active devotion to his service ; and when he cannot successfully tempt us to sins of commission, he is aware that we are lamentably heedless where those of omission are concerned. Can you wonder at his anxiety ? Consider, if all Christians acted up to their characters, as, "the salt of the earth," "a city set on a hill," "lights of the world," a people "zealous of good works," and all that the scripture ap-

points them to be, and to do, what a vigorous warfare would be maintained against the powers of evil ! What dangerous enemies we should be, to the great enemy of God ! A converted character, who passes through life without having been in any way designedly instrumental to the conversion of another, may indeed be regarded by Satan as a lost prize ; but not as an active opponent. Therefore, to make us utterly unprofitable, is his unquestionable aim ; and if he can engage more than one in any useless occupation, his purpose is so much the better answered. If he can place an idle worldly book in the hands of a Christian, he gains one advantage : if he can set one Christian to write an idle or worldly letter to another that advantage is doubled.'

'I feel convinced,' said Mrs. Williams, 'that letters may be very idle without being actually worldly. You have shown me that

we may trifle as unprofitably upon spiritual, as upon temporal, subjects.'

'I am glad you see it, my dear sister. But to resume our more immediate subject, the quantity of time to be devoted in this way. I think that a very small portion of it will suffice to do what is really our duty; or, if we be much disposed for such employment, to furnish us with a reasonable measure of gratification. If those charges that you so much dread, from your numerous correspondents, are brought against you, consider, you stand on the high vantage ground of that principle which they, in common with you, recognise: and you have solid reasons, such as they cannot gainsay, to advance for your conscientious proceeding. Should these reasons fail of obtaining their full acquiescence, you must betake yourself to the consideration that it is a snare of the enemy to turn your feet from the straight path of duty. You may recognise in the

spirit of those reproaches, somewhat of his ancient weapons, wherewith he opposed your first escape: and be sure that, however the affection of your friends may lead them to regret the loss of your frequent communications, if they be influenced by that charity which "thinketh no evil," they will not suspect you of any improper motives.'

'I certainly must set about it;,' remarked Mrs. Williams, 'will you help me, by prayer and counsel?'

'Indeed, dear Ellen, you shall have the very best of my poor services, in whatsoever way I may be enabled to render them useful to you, and I can give you also an encouraging thought, to begin with. For one who may take offence at your determination, several will lay to heart the reasons on which you ground it. These you must distinctly state, in a spirit of love, and with prayer. Example is of great and extensive efficacy;

and when that example comes to enforce a decidedly scriptural view, somewhat better than our poor reason will work to strengthen its effect. Go on, therefore, and do it as to the Lord.'

'If we had all this in a little book,' said Mrs. Williams, 'it would save a great deal of writing.'

'Such a book,' returned her brother, smiling, 'might presume on extensive patronage. No one can conceive, who has not experienced, or very closely observed it, what a tax this letter-writing mania imposes on persons of business; and more especially on those whose business is chiefly carried on with pen and ink. I have some friends, whose annoyances in this way it has really grieved me to witness. A clergyman, bearing the honourable burden of very extensive parochial duty, with occasional, and indeed very frequent calls to publish on theological subjects, is one. Another is a gentleman,

with an interesting family, under whose charge is placed a large number of pupils ; in fact, a considerable school, boarding in his house. A third is a most diligent member of parliament, whose mornings, during the session, are occupied in committees, and his evenings in the important debates that often extend far beyond midnight. Little do the ordinary correspondents of such men seem to consider the severe privation that they must endure, in being called on to sacrifice some of the very few and short seasons of domestic intercourse, and needful rest, to the reading of their well-meant epistles, not to mention the answering of them.'

'And I,' said Mrs. Williams, 'have a friend as foolish as myself, indulging her weak fear of offending at a far more serious cost. She writes for the press ; and on her literary labours depend, not only her own maintenance, but the support and comfort of

several others. With weak eyes, a constitution and habits utterly opposed to sedentary employment, and great tendency to nervous excitement, she finds her allotted task as much as she can, without serious self-injury, perform, and rather more than she is fully competent to get through. I assure you I have stood aghast at the piles of letters with which her affectionate friends in the *real* love and anxiety that they feel for her, take care that her table should be heaped. The other day she said to me, while preparing a sheet of paper: 'I must use this to answer the enquiries that a dear friend has just been most solicitously making about my health, and who has also charged me to send her a full and immediate report.' 'Indeed,' I replied, 'you seem to have written enough for this day, to judge by your pale looks, and the quantity of manuscript there. Put on your bonnet for a brisk walk in the delightful fresh air: it will enable you to give a better

account of your health to-morrow.' 'To-morrow,' she replied, 'I shall have other letters to answer; and if I defer this, I must write it after midnight, which will injure me yet more than the loss of a walk now. And I have work enough to occupy me till twelve o'clock, as it is, when I again sit down to my regular employment.' She cast a longing look to the window, gazed for a moment at the tempting landscape, sighed, shook her head, and commenced her letter.'

'Nay, then,' exclaimed Mr. Stanley, 'we must really have a book about it, Ellen; and if the letter-writing public take it in good part, what a boon it will be to your poor friend. The case of one who writes for the public ought certainly to be considered as presenting a double claim to indulgence; because the best thoughts of such are sure to come before their friends in print; and it is hard to establish a run upon their intellectual bank, which may too probably have the ef-

fect of breaking it altogether. The continual tension of a mind kept on the stretch, and the perpetual exertion of faculties that ought to have their regular interval of repose, including too the privation of bodily exercise, change of scene, and the profitable no less than cheerful varieties of conversational intercourse, all these things tend to the premature breaking up alike of physical and mental strength. Besides, the very publications are announcements of the author's well-being to absent friends. My men of business, too, will be gainers to no trifling amount, if we succeed in checking the overflow of epistolary good-will; and how many now naked and shivering creatures may rejoice in the prospect of being clad, when we see the activity of female fingers directed into a more profitable channel of abiding beneficence, and those who are now ready to every good word equally ready to every good work.'

THE END.

APPENDIX.

WHEN it was first proposed to give this little treatise to the American public, it was with the idea of presenting it alone : but as the evil of a too extensive and too trifling correspondence is not the only one to which young ladies are prone in this relation, it has been deemed advisable to append to it an extract from Mrs. Ellis's writings, which contains most valuable hints on the subject of letter-writing, and points out the circumstances under which it becomes not only a privilege and a source of reciprocal enjoyment but a positive duty.

Merciful indeed, is the provision thus made to soothe the sorrows of separation, and to cherish the affection and sympathy of friends. How vast an instrument of usefulness and happiness it becomes, when consecrated to the honour of God first, and used only in dependence on His blessing ! What could supply its place to the absent member of a loving home-circle ? What would be exchanged for that thrill of rapture which fills the heart of the young wife, as she receives, with unbroken punctuality, the well-filled sheet, which, with its minute details of domestic affairs, wafts her back in spirit to the very centre of her childhoods'

home, and gladdens her with the assurance of unchanged affection and unwavering sympathy; and should the precious link be broken that has long united loving hearts in oneness of feeling; should one of the correspondents be left to the desolation of bereavement, how consoling will it be to look back on the hours thus devoted to the gratification of the departed, and to read over again and again the touching assurances of her delight in their results. Then there are the sick, the sad, the suffering among our friends, from whom we must look for no reciprocation of epistolary favours, nor even of evinced gratification. But if incidentally, the expression of feeling with which your letters are received, is permitted to reach you; if only once you have heard that the feeble sufferer whom you love, has been cheered and soothed and blessed by your account of her friends around you, of the work of God as it advances in your vicinity, by the outpouring of your own warm sympathy in her trials, and by your suggestions of heavenly consolations, will it not be enough to animate you to perseverance in that department of duty, even without other hope of recompense? Let us not forget that it is the voice of infinite Wisdom and Love, proclaiming immutable truth, which tells us "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

"Women are only weak in their vanity, their selfishness, their falsehood to each other. In their integrity, their faithfulness, their devoted affection, they rise to an almost superhuman eminence; because they are

strong in the elements of immaterial being, and powerful in the nature which is capable, when regenerated, of being shared with angels.

“From the nature of true friendship, we turn to the consideration of what are its requirements. These, also, are mutual. If we expect to receive, we must be studious to give. An interchange of kind offices and evident proofs of affection are essential to the vitality of friendship ; avoiding, however, the slightest approach to any thing like a debtor and creditor account of the number of presents given or received, or even the number of letters exchanged.

“It seems a strange anomaly in friendship, that young persons, however ardently attached, should so seldom write, except when a letter is considered to be due by a certain length of time having elapsed since the last was received. It often happens, that one friend is particularly engaged, while the other has an abundance of unoccupied time : but a letter is still required by the idle party, or the love which she thinks so glowing and so tender, finds no channel of expression to her friend. Perhaps a friend is ill ; and then is the time, above all others, when real love would dictate a succession of kind letters, such as would not tax the afflicted, or the feeble one, with the effort of making any return. There is, in fact, a mystery about the letter-writing of young women, which I have never been able fully to understand. It occupies their time ; is used to drain their purses, or the purses of their friends ; it calls forth more complaining than almost any thing else they have to do ; the letters they receive are seldom fraught

with much interest; and yet they plunge into this reciprocity of annoyance, as if the chief business of life was to be writing or receiving letters.

"Still I am far from supposing that this means of interchanging sentiment and thought, might not be rendered highly beneficial to the youthful mind; because I believe writing is of great importance as a branch of education. Without this habit, few persons, and especially women, think definitely. The accustomed occupation of their minds is that of musing; and they are, consequently, seldom able to disentangle a single clear idea from the current of vague thoughts, which they suffer perpetually to flow, and which affords them a constant, but, at the same time, a profitless amusement, in the variety of ideas it presents, alike without form, and void. But, in order to write with any degree of perspicuity, we are, to a certain extent, compelled to think; and, consequently, the habit of writing letters, if the subject-matter be well chosen, might be rendered highly advantageous to young women, who, on the termination of their scholastic exercises, require, more than at any other time of life, some frequently recurring mental occupation, to render their education complete.

"The art of writing a really good letter ranks unquestionably amongst the most valuable accomplishments of woman, and next to that of conversing well. In both cases, the first thing to be avoided, is commonplace; because, whatever partakes of the nature of commonplace, is not only vulgar, but ineffective. I know not

- I can better define this term, so frequently used,

and so little understood, than by saying that commonplace consists chiefly in speaking of things by their little qualities, rather than their great ones. Thus it is commonplace to speak of religious persons as using cant, to speak of distinguished characters as being well or ill-dressed, and to speak of the words of Shakspeare as being peculiar in their style. It is also commonplace to use those expressions of kindness, or sympathy, which custom has led us to expect as a matter of course. And we never feel this more, than in cases of affliction or death ; because there is a kind of set phraseology made use of on such occasions, which those who really feel would often be glad to vary, if they only knew how. It is commonplace to speak of some fact as recently discovered, to those who have long known it. But above all that is genuine in commonplace, the kind of flattery generally adopted by men, when they mean to address themselves pleasantly to women, deserves the credit of pre-eminence. Indeed, so deficient, for the most part, is this flattery, in point, originalty, and adaptation, that I have known sensible women, who felt more really flattered by the most humiliating truths, even plainly spoken ; because such treatment implied a confidence in their strength of mind and good sense in being able to bear it.

“Commonplace letters are such as, but for the direction, would have done as well for any other individual as the one to whom they are addressed. In description especially, is desirable to avoid commonplace. A correspondent making a tour of the Lakes, tells you that on such a day she set off to the summit of Helvel-

lyn. That the first part of the ascent was steep and difficult, the latter more easy ; that the view from the summit was magnificent, extending over so many lakes, and so many other mountains ; and there ends the story ; and well for you, if it does end there. But such writers unfortunately often go on through a whole catalogue of beauties and sublimities, no single one of which they set before you in such a manner as to render it one whit more attractive, or indeed more peculiar in any of its features, than the king's highway.

"In the vain hop of avoiding commonplace, some young writers, have recourse to extravagant expressions when describing little things ; a mode of writing, which, besides being the medium of falsehood, leaves them in the uncomfortable predicament of having no language adequate to what is great.

"It is difficult to say what is the direct opposite of commonplace, without giving lengthened quotations from the best style of epistolary correspondence, with which the literature of our country during the last century abounds. There is a quality both in writing and conversation, to which I can give no other name than *freshness*, which is not only opposite in its nature and effect to commonplace, but on which I believe depends more than half the pleasure and amusement we derive from the intercourse of mind with mind. Few persons possess this charm ; because few are humble enough to suppose that it would be any advantage to them ; and those who do, are always in danger of losing it by writing too much. The letters of a woman of moderate

abilities, and limited sphere of observation, may possess this great beauty; while those of a more highly gifted, or accomplished writer, may want it; because it must ever depend upon a capability of receiving vivid impressions, combined with a certain degree of simplicity of heart.

“The first consideration in commencing a letter should be, ‘What is my object in writing it?’ If simply for the relief of your own mind you take up the pen, remember that such a communication can only be justified by pressing and peculiar circumstances, and that it ought only to be addressed to the nearest and dearest of your friends, whose love for you is of such a nature as to pardon so selfish an act.”

“A higher object in writing, is to give pleasure or afford benefit, to an absent friend; it is therefore necessary to place yourself in idea in her circumstances, and consider what she would most wish to know. If her affection for you be such, and such I am aware affection often is, that she has no desire beyond that of receiving intelligence, concerning yourself, let your descriptions of your state and circumstances be clear and fresh; so that she may see you as you really are, and, as it were live with you through the enjoyments or the trials of every day. How strong and lively may be the impressions thus conveyed — how deep the interest they excite, provided only the writer will condescend to be sufficiently simple — sufficiently sincere.”

“It is, however, only under peculiar circumstances, such as change of scene and situation, that young persons can have much of this kind to communicate

What then are they to say? Shall the minute details of family affairs be raked up, to fill their letters? This is at least a dangerous alternative, more especially as it too frequently induces a habit of exaggeration, in order to make what is called 'a good story' out of a mere trifle; and thus, that worst kind of falsehood, which is partly true, becomes perpetuated through the medium of pen and paper.

"To avoid this danger on the one hand, and the weariness of writing without any thing to say, on the other, would it not be practicable for young women to agree, for their own improvement and that of their friends, to correspond on some given subject? and if unequal to the task of treating it in a style of an essay, they might at least relate to each other some important or amusing facts, which they had met with in the course of their reading, and by relating them in their own language, and then comparing them with that of the author, they would be learning valuable lessons in the art of composition; for of all kinds of style, that of easy narrative is the most useful.

"The study of nature in this department of mental improvement, might be made to afford a never-failing source of interest, both for individual thought and familiar communication. The peculiarities of plants and animals, and even the different traits of human character developed by people of different countries and grades of society, might all contribute to the same object, so as in time to displace from the page of female correspondence, the trifling, the commonplace, or the more mischievous gossip, which that page too generally unfolds."

QUARTERLY ADVERTISER.

No. 1.

JANUARY, 1844.

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY,

BY

**JOHN S. TAYLOR & CO.,
PUBLISHERS & BOOKSELLERS,
BRICK CHURCH CHAPEL,
145 Nassau-street, New-York.**

ONE SHEET PERIODICAL.

A LIST
OF
VALUABLE AND POPULAR BOOKS,

PUBLISHED BY

JOHN S. TAYLOR & CO.,

**THEOLOGICAL AND SUNDAY SCHOOL PUBLISHERS AND
BOOKSELLERS,**

**At the New-York Juvenile and Sunday School Book Depository,
Brick Church Chapel, 145 Nassau-st.,
NEW-YORK.**

**D'AUBIGNE'S HISTORY OF THE GREAT
REFORMATION, abridged by the Rev. Ed-
ward Dalton, 1 vol. 18mo. 447 pages. Price 50**

Probably no book of modern date has obtained such a wide-spread popularity, and been so extensively read as D'Aubigne's History of the Great Reformation of the sixteenth century, in Germany, Switzerland, &c. Engrossing and enduring as must be the interest connected with the details of the historical incident of the

Great Reformation, the author of this work has invested them with all the charm and fascination of romance.

The Abridgement retains most of the attractions of the larger work, and brings it within the means, as to time and expense, of a still larger body of readers. Of the faithfulness with which this Abridgement has been made, the following testimonial from the New-York Observer of Oct. 21, is abundant and satisfactory evidence. It is from the pen of a distinguished clergyman of New-York, whose opinions on such subjects are entitled to universal confidence.

"Abridgement of D'Aubigne.—The following notice of the Abridgement published by John S. Taylor & Co. is from a distinguished officer of the American Tract Society.

'I have read the Rev. Mr. Dalton's Abridgement of D'Aubigne's History, as reprinted by Mr. Taylor, and have fully compared it with Mr. Carter's edition of the original work. I am free to say that I think the abridgement is made with great fidelity and sound judgment. It consists almost wholly of the author's own words, and embraces those parts which are of most prominent interest. Doubtless those who can command the time will prefer to read the original work; but those who wish to have the substance of the work in less compass, will here find it faithfully condensed by one who entered into the true spirit of D'Aubigne. Both editions I believe calculated to be eminently useful, and I wish to both the widest circulation.'

The work is printed on good type, contains 447 pages, and is sold at the exceedingly low price of 50 cents."

**A VOICE FROM ANTIQUITY, To the Men
of the Nineteenth Century : or, Read the Book.**

- By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, author of the "History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century." 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . . 25
- THE VOICE OF THE CHURCH ONE**, Under all the Successive Forms of Christianity: A Discourse, pronounced at the opening of the Theological School at Geneva. By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, D. D. 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . . 25
- PUSEYISM EXAMINED.** By J. H. Merle D'Aubigne, D. D., author of the "History of the Reformation in the Sixteenth Century." With an Introductory Notice of the author, by Robert Baird. 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . . 25
- THE CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS**, and other Fragments, from the Study of a Pastor. By Gardiner Spring, Pastor of the Brick Presbyterian Church in the city of New-York. 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . . 75

The following notice of Spring's Fragments is extracted from the N. Y. Commercial Advertiser.

The first piece, entitled the "Church in the Wilderness," is one of the most beautiful sketches in our language. It is in every respect a finished production—a picture complete in all its parts, that for the time captivates the affections, enchains the powers of the mind, and fills the soul with the most exalted conceptions. The Church is represented, under the various circumstances of her earthly allotment, leaning on the arm of her Beloved, and deriving all her strength from this unfailing source. The chastened but glowing fancy, elegance of diction, and purity of thought, conspire to give beauty to the image, and make us dwell upon it with delight.

The other pieces in the collection are scarcely of inferior merit. "The Inquiring Meeting" portrays with great vividness some of the phases which the hu-

man heart exhibits, when under the influence of religious excitement. The "Letter to a Young Clergyman" abounds in instructions of inestimable value. It may perhaps be doubted whether the author attaches sufficient importance to pastoral visitation. "The Panorama" is an affecting delineation of the employment of men as they usually appear on the stage of active life. "The Useful Christian" contains sound practical suggestions for informing the mind, regulating the heart, and inspiring energy of action.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE WORLD TO THE

BIBLE, by Gardiner Spring, D. D., 1 vol. 12 mo. Price

1 00

THEOPNEUSTY, Or the Plenary Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, by L. Gaussen, Professor of Theology in the new Theological School of Geneva, Switzerland. Second American, from the second French edition, revised and enlarged by the author. Translated by the Rev. Edward Norriskisk, 1 vol. 12mo. Price

1 00

THE FAMILY OF BETHANY, By Rev. L. Bonnet, with an Introductory Essay, by the Rev. Hugh White, 1 vol. 18mo. Price

37

MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. WM. NEVINS, D. D., 1 vol. 12mo.

1 00

TRANSPLANTED FLOWERS, or Memoirs of Mrs. Rumpff, daughter of John Jacob Astor, and the Duchess de Br glie, daughter of Mad. de Stael, by Rev. Robert Baird, 1 vol. 18mo. Price

38

AIDS TO PREACHING AND HEARING, by Rev. Thos. H. Skinner, D. D., 1 vol. 12mo. Price

1 00

HISTORY OF THE REFORMATION, by Thomas Hartwell Horne, author of "Horne's Introduction to the Bible," 1 vol. 18mo. Price

50

MEMOIR OF CHARLES LATHROP WIN- SLOW , 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	31
THE WIDOW'S SON , and other Familiar Tales, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	31
LETTERS FROM IRELAND , by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	1 00
PRINCIPALITIES AND POWERS IN HEA- VENLY PLACES , by Charlotte Elizabeth, with an Introduction, by Rev. Edward Bicker- stith, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	87
PERSONAL RECOLLECTIONS , by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	87
THE SIEGE OF DERRY , Or, Sufferings of the Protestants. A Tale of the Revolution, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	75
HELEN FLEETWOOD , a Narrative, by Char- lotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	1 00
FLORAL BIOGRAPHY , by Charlotte Eliza- beth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	75
THE FLOWER GARDEN , a Sequel to Floral Biography, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 12mo. Price . . .	75
THE WRONGS OF WOMAN , Or, The For- saken Home, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	25
THE WRONGS OF WOMAN , Or, The Lit- tle Pin-Headers, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	25
LETTER WRITING , by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	31
FLOWER FADED , by Rev. John Angell James. 18mo. Price . . .	37
MEMOIR OF MARTHA , by John Angell James, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	25
A PATTERN FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND TRACT DISTRIBUTORS	

AND A WORD FOR ALL, by John Angell James, gilt. Price	31
COUNSELS TO THE YOUNG, by Rev. A. Alexander, D. D. Price	31
SELF CULTIVATION, by Tryon Edwards. Price	31
EARLY PIETY, by Rev. Jacob Abbott. gilt.	31
GLIMPSES OF THE PAST, by Charlotte Elizabeth. 18me. Price	50
TALES AND ILLUSTRATIONS, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	50
FLOWER OF INNOCENCE, OR RACHEL, a true Narrative, with other Tales, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	50
PHILIP AND HIS GARDEN, by Charlotte Elizabeth, with four engravings, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
THE SIMPLE FLOWER. and other Tales, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
ALICE BENDEN: A TRUE NARRATIVE, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
THE STAR, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25
THE GOLDEN IMAGE, by Charlotte Elizabeth, 18mo. Price	25
PROMISING AND PERFORMING, by Charlotte Elizabeth. Price	25
BACKBITING, by Charlotte Elizabeth. Price	25
ROCKY ISLAND, and other Parables, by Samuel Wilberforce, M. A., 1 vol. 18mo. Price	37
THE LITTLE WANDERERS, by Sam'l. Wilberforce, M. A., 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25
THE KING AND HIS SERVANTS, by Samuel Wilberforce, M. A. 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25
THE PROPHET'S GUARD, by Samuel Wilberforce, M. A., 1 vol. 18mo. Price	25

CLOSING SCENES OF THE LIFE OF SAMUEL WISDOM , illustrating the usefulness of Tract Distribution, and early Sabbath School Instruction, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	31
MORAL TALES , by Robert Merry, with engravings, 1 vol. 18mo. Price . . .	50
THE PEEP OF DAY , or a series of the earliest religious Instruction the Infant Mind is capable of receiving, with Verses illustrative of the Subjects, in 1 vol. 18mo. with engravings. Price . . .	50
LINE UPON LINE , by the author of Peep of Day, a second series. Price . . .	50
PRECEPT UPON PRECEPT by the author of Peep of Day, and Line upon Line, etc. Price . . .	0
THE LILLY OF THE VALLEY , by Mrs. Sherwood. Price . . .	31
SHANTY, TAE BLACKSMITH , by Mrs. Sherwood. Price . . .	50
THE TRAVELLER , or the Wonder of Art. SCRIPTURE TALES FOR CHILDREN , exemplified by appropriate domestic stories; by Miss Graham, Illustrated with seven elegant engravings by Adams, 1 vol. 16mo. cloth. Price . . .	31
MORAL LESSONS AND STORIES , from the Proverbs of Solomon, by Jane Strickland, Illustrated with 12 elegant engravings by Adams, 1 vol. 16mo. cloth. Price . . .	75
A VISIT TO NORTHERN EUROPE , Or, Sketches, Descriptive, Historical, Political, and Moral, of Denmark, Norway, Sweden, and Finland, and the free cities of Hamburgh and Lubeck; containing notices of the Manners and Customs, Commerce, Manufactures, Arts and Sciences, Education, Literature and Reli-	75

gion of those Countries and Cities. By the Rev. Robert Baird; with Maps and numerous Engravings, in 2 vols. 12mo. Price .	2 00
HEROINES OF SACRED HISTORY , by Mrs. Steele, 1 vol. 18mo. Price .	50
A SUMMER JOURNEY IN THE WEST , by Mrs. Steele, author of "Heroines of Sacred History," 1 vol. 12mo. Price .	75
MEMOIRS OF MRS. ELIZABETH B. DWIGHT , by Rev. H. G. O. Dwight, of the Mission at Constantinople; and MEMOIR OF MRS. GRANT , of the Persia Mission, 1 vol. 12mo. Price .	1 00
MEMOIR OF MRS. SARAH LOUISA TAYLOR , by Rev. Lot Jones, A. M. Fifth Edition, 18mo. Price .	50
MEMOIR OF TELLSTORM ; The first Swedish Missionary to Lapland, with an Appendix, giving an account of the Stockholm Mission, by the Rev. Geo. Scott, 1 vol. 18mo. Price .	31
SKETCHES OF NEWPORT AND ITS VICINITY , with Notices respecting the History, Settlement and Geography of Rhode Island, Illustrated with numerous Engravings, 1 vol. 18mo. Price .	75
A PLEA FOR THE INTEMPERATE , by David M. Reese, M. D., 1 vol. 18mo. Price .	25
THE RHODE ISLAND COTTAGE , Or, A Gift for the Children of Sorrow; A Narrative of Facts; by a Presbyterian of the Church, 1 vol. 18mo. .	31
THE YOUNG CHURCH MEMBER'S MANUAL , by Leonard Bacon, D. D. of New-Haven, 1 vol. 18mo. Price .	50
A TALE OF THE HUGENOTS , or Memoirs of a French Refugee Family; translated from	

the Manuscripts of James Fontaine, by a Lady ; with an Introduction, by Francis L. Hawkes, D. D., 1 vol. 12mo. Price	75
A GUIDE TO MOTHERS AND NURSES, by the late Caleb Ticknor, A. M., M. D. 1 vol. 12mo. Price	75
HISTORY OF AMERICAN MISSIONS, by Joseph Tracy, 1 vol. 8vo. Price	2 25
PSYCHOLOGY, or a View of the Human Soul, by Frederick A. Rauch, D. P., 1 vol. 8vo. 2d ed. revised. Price	1 50
This work has been most favourably noticed by many of the first scholars in the country, and has been in several of the leading literary institutions of the country.	
THE CAUSE AND CURE OF INFIDELITY, by Dr. Nelson, 1 vol. 12mo.	75
LECTURES ON UNIVERSALISM, by Rev. Joel Parker, D. D., President of the New-York Theological Seminary, 12mo.	75
JACOB WRESTLING WITH THE ANGEL, and SOLOMON THE SHULAMITE, by Krummacher, author of <i>Elijah the Tishbite</i> , 1 vol. 12mo.	75
CORNELIUS THE CENTURION, by Krum- macher, 1 vol. 12mo.	50
SERMONS ON REVIVALS, by Rev. Albert Barnes, with an Introduction, by Rev. Joel Parker, D. D., 1 vol. 12mo.	38
A PEEP INTO NO. 90 OF THE OXFORD TRACTS, by Charlotte Elizabeth,	25
THE BACKSLIDER, by Andrew Fuller, with an Introduction, by John Angell James, 18mo.	31
CHRISTIAN LOVE, or, <i>The Duty of Personal Effort for the Conversion of the Impenitent,</i> 32mo.	25

CHRISTIAN RETIREMENT, or, Spiritual Exercises of the Heart, by the author of "Christian Experience." Third American, from the eighth London edition. Illustrated with an elegant steel plate Frontispiece, 1 vol. 12mo.	1 00
CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE, by the author of "Christian Retirement," illustrated with an elegant steel plate Frontispiece, 1 vol. 12mo.	1 00
THE CHRISTIAN'S POCKET COMPANION, selected from the works of President Edwards and others, gilt.	31
ADVICE TO A YOUNG CHRISTIAN, by a village pastor, with an Introduction, by Rev. Dr. Alexander, (new edition,) 1 vol. 18mo.	38
A NEW TRIBUTE to the Memory of James Brainard Taylor, composed of writings distinct from those embraced in the Memoir, 1 vol. 12mo.	1 00
THE CHRISTIAN CITIZEN, by the Rev. A. D. Eddy, of Newark, 1 vol. 12mo.	50
THE GLOW WORM, by Charlotte Elizabeth,	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
THE TWO CARPENTERS,	"
THE WAY TO DO GOOD,	"
THE LITTLE NESTLINGS,	"
THE PREMIUM,	"
THE DYING SHEEP,	"
THE BIRD'S NEST,	"
GOOD AND BAD LUCK,	"
LITTLE OATHS,	"
THE TWO SERVANTS,	"
THE FAITHFUL STEWARD,	"
THE BEE,	"
THE SWAN,	"
THE BOAT,	"
THE BOW IN THE CLOUD,	"
THE RED BERRIES,	"

THE WILLOW TREE, by Charlotte Elizabeth,	6½
THE ROSE BUD,	"
THE HATED TASK,	"
THE FORTUNE TELLER,	"
THE HEN AND HER CHICKENS,	"
THE BIBLE THE BEST BOOK,	"
ANNE BELL, OR THE FAULTS,	"
WHERE ARE YOU GOING?	"
THE VISIT,	"
JAMES ORWELL,	"
THE SHORTER CATECHISM, of the Reverend Assembly of Divines, with proofs thereof out of the Scriptures, in words at length, 18mo.	\$5 per 100

N. B.—Any valuable Books to be had in New-York, furnished by JOHN S. TAYLOR & Co., at the lowest cash prices.

MEMOIR
OF
MRS. SARAH LOUISA TAYLOR.

PUBLISHED BY JOHN S. TAYLOR & CO.
AT THE NEW YORK SUNDAY SCHOOL AND JUVENILE BOOK DEPOSITORY,
Brick Church Chapel, 145 Nassau Street.

NOTICES.

From the Christian Mirror.

MEMOIRS OF MRS SARAH LOUIS TAYLOR ; or an Illustration of the work of the Holy Spirit in awakening, renewing, and sanctifying the heart. BY LOT JONES, A. M., New York : John S. Taylor, 1838, pp. 324.

Memoirs of individuals have become so common, that not a few may be ready to ask, Why publish another ? And we might ask, in turn, why *not* published another ? After all the objections that can be urged, it is a kind of reading which interests, and will continue to interest the mass of society. Nothing scarcely arrests attention, like personal history—the workings of individual minds, or has more influence in forming character. And why should we not as readily welcome a new book in this department of literature, as a new edition of an old one ? Every person whose history is worth reading, has some individuality of character, which distinguishes him from others ; or some peculiar relations or circumstances in his existence ; which call for modifications of inward exercises or external conduct, more or less peculiar : and it is interesting to see how perfect

ADVERTISEMENTS.

a regulator religious principle is—how admirably it will adjust the feelings and the conduct to the demands of the case, whatever be the peculiarity of natural temperament, or of the personal relations.

We have no fears that the above question will be asked by any one, *after* reading this little volume. If he does not feel 'reproved, corrected, or instructed in righteousness,' it will be because he has made pre-eminent attainments in scriptural knowledge and holy, useful living; or else because his conscience has lost its susceptibility. In Mrs. Taylor religion appears with dignity as well as grace, in power as well as beauty. Hers was the faith which "works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world." Its fruits were choice and abundant. Nor were her virtues cancelled, or their influence more than destroyed by gross defects and blemishes. She had uncommon symmetry and harmony of character. With a uniform and controlling desire to do good, she never lacked the means and opportunity; and did much, in the best and highest sense of the expression. She won not a few to righteousness. Her religion was a religion of diligence and energy, rendering her "steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord;" and her labor was "not in vain."

We see in Mrs. T. the same religion, in its essential elements, and in its more important developements, which glowed in and beamed forth from the "great cloud of witnesses:"—the same faith, the same humility, the same dependence on atoning blood, the same susceptibility to the constraining influence of Christ's love: "We thus judge, that, if Christ died for all, then all were dead; and that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them." We see deep religious experience, but no extravagance—strong feelings, but no fanaticism—absorbing devotion, but no cant—firmness of principle, but no party bigotry. We have here, not only holiness in its principle, but the *beauty* of holiness adorning and perfecting the character.

Mr. Jones was greatly favoured in the subject of his narrative; and he has wrought up his materials with great skill and judgement. Nothing has been inserted, which would have been better omitted; and nothing appears to be wanting, which was necessary to a just appreciation of her character.

We unhesitatingly commend this Memoir to all females, in all ranks of society. The most refined and best educated will rise from its perusal, improved in literary taste, intellectual ex-

ADVERTISEMENTS.

pansion, and correct thinking ; and the less favored will learn from it what it is in their power to become by diligence, by prayer, by studying the Scriptures, by a whole-hearted devotedness to the duties which they owe to God and their fellow men.

From the Boston Recorder.

It is not possible to do justice to this captivating and instructive volume, within the compass of the few lines to which our notice must be confined. And perhaps it is best to desist altogether from an *attempt* to convey a correct impression of it to our readers ; for it must be confessed that our own emotions on the perusal of it are too strong to permit the exercise of the most cool and deliberate judgement as to its intrinsic merits. To follow a lovely youth through the scenes of childhood and ripening years ; to mark the various traits of intellectual and moral character, as they are developed in all the relations of the child, the sister, the friend, the wife, the mother, the teacher, and the disciple of Jesus : and then to group the whole, and contemplate the triumphs of faith over natural affection, and the heart's corruptions, and the power of death itself ; cannot fail to excite very strong emotion in any bosom not petrified, even though the execution of the work were marked with many imperfections. But Mr. Jones has not failed in the fulfilment of the task he has assumed. The simplicity and clearness of his delineations ; the richness and fulness of evangelical sentiment diffused through the whole, and arising naturally from his subject, the dignified tenderness of his style, and the accurate discrimination made between spurious and genuine religion in his incidental remarks, show him to be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, and leave an impress on the volume, that will render it very precious to every evangelical reader. Any Christian who desires above all things to grow in grace ; to learn the nature of the Christian conflict, and to use successfully the weapons that shall give him the victory over his spiritual enemies ; or, in one word, to learn "the mind of the Spirit" on these points, will do well to study this volume.

ADVERTISEMENTS.

From the Episcopal Sunday School Visitor.

We commence our brief notice of this excellent book, with an appropriate extract from its pages: "You ask my opinion of religious biography, and of the emulation it excites. It certainly has a powerful effect. I think the perusal of well written narrative, and especially memoirs of females, has a happy influence, and is calculated to inspire with confidence on the one hand, humility on the other." P. 157. With this opinion we perfectly agree. We think that *well* written narrative, or biography, is well calculated to profit the reader, *who reads it in order to profit*. The trials and misfortunes, the failures and short comings of others, may all serve, as beacons, to save us from the shipwreck of *our* faith; whilst the providential mercies and blessings which have been the comfort and support of others, may encourage us to put our trust in the LORD. In too many instances, however, the fond partiality of friendship, gives an eulogy instead of a simple relation of facts, and thus diminishes the power with which the simple truth might (and with which it generally does) affect the mind.

Sometimes the usefulness of religious biography is lessened by a redundancy of ornament in the style: by too many digressions, which are continually breaking into the interest which the reader feels in the narrative, and driving away the profitable reflections which it suggests to the mind.

It is very seldom that we meet with a book so entirely free from blemishes of this kind, as the one before us. It is the simple portrait of an amiable, enlightened, and devotedly pious Christian, drawn by a most judicious and faithful hand.

The young Christian who is just commencing his course, and whose temptations and trials are sometimes leading him to despondency, will read this book with thankfulness; and those who are yet strangers to vital religion may be induced, from this lonely instance of its powerful effects in sustaining the soul, under the heaviest afflictions of life, and in the hour of sickness and death, to seek, for themselves, an interest in the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

Mrs. Taylor evidently possessed a fine and cultivated mind. Of this the beautiful fragments of poetry, which are given in the course of the book, and the extracts from her correspondence, are an evidence. Had those talents been cultivated, for the world and its approbation, she might, perhaps, have attained *all* that this world can give, ~~fame—applause—and~~

ADVERTISEMENTS.

celebrity. But what would they avail her now? She has chosen the *better* part, which cannot be taken from her.

It would be injustice to the publishers not to notice the beautiful manner in which the work has been executed. The paper and type are excellent, and the engravings good: but still the matter of the book is its main recommendation.

From the Episcopal Recorder.

This is a new work just issued from the press, and well worthy the attention of Christians. It describes, mainly from her own writings, the character of a Christian, whose experience of the power of sin and of the power of grace, was deeper than is usual, and whose example of usefulness to others gives beautiful evidence of the reality of her own principles of character. We have been much interested in looking over this volume, and rejoice to recommend it to our readers. They will find it an uncommonly interesting and instructive biography, worthy of its excellent author, and adapted to be eminently useful to themselves.

From the Christian Intelligencer.

This a well written biography of an amiable and devoted Christian, who pleasantly and beautifully exhibited the Christian character in the different relations of life and in her early death. The reader will be pleased with the spirit and sentiments of her *and* correspondence introduced and scattered throughout the volume. It is calculated to be useful and edifying, and we freely commend it to our readers. It is published in a beautiful style.

From the Christian Watchman.

The interesting subject of this memoir was born at East Haddam, Conn., January 18, 1809, and died August 2, 1836. Books of this description are sure to obtain readers, and therefore we sincerely wish they always combined as much solid

ADVERTISEMENTS.

instruction with affecting and interesting narrative as we find in this volume. "He that winneth souls is wise." Every endeavor, therefore, to secure so important an object, which is not at variance with the principles and the spirit of revelation, is wise also. As the author fervently prays, so we sincerely hope that this work "may subserve the interests of our holy religion, and be the means of leading many to the fountain of eternal life."

It is a lamentable fact, but one we suppose no one will venture to deny, that there are persons, who, though they cannot be prevailed upon to read a few pages of a book of this kind, would need no persuasion to sit down and peruse any of Bulwer's novels, from the preface to the finis, without suffering their attention to be interrupted. A person can hardly read this volume without feeling that, for the time at least, he is a wiser and a better man. The author has produced a book alike creditable to the powers of his mind, and to the devotional feelings of his heart; and which in our opinion, justly entitles him to the thanks of the religious public, among whom we sincerely hope it will obtain an extensive circulation and an attentive perusal.

From the Baptist Record.

This is the memoir of a lady, who was a native of Connecticut, but passed a portion of her life in New York city, and died at the age of twenty-seven. This work is one of more than ordinary interest. It is particularly valuable in two respects. First, as exhibiting the workings of the natural heart, and the operations of grace, in a character so amiable and correct, and apparently so interested in religion and the happiness of others, that one could scarcely avoid the conclusion that she was a Christian long before she indulged a hope of having become one. Yet the opposition of her heart to the Gospel was made apparent, *and grace alone could subdue it.* Again, her deep-toned, habitual, practical piety exhibit an example which all might contemplate with profit. She was heavenly-minded, as well as unwearied in her efforts to do good; drinking of the same spirit which imbued that devoted servant of God, Harlan Page, to whose faithful labours she was in part indebted as the instrument of her conversion.



3 2044 050 505 049



